1-1-1996

# The politics of anticommunism in Massachusetts, 1930-1960.

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# THE POLITICS OF ANTICOMMUNISM IN MASSACHUSETTS, 1930-1960

A Dissertation Presented

by

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Submitted to the Graduate School of the
University of Massachusetts Amherst in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

May 1996

Department of History

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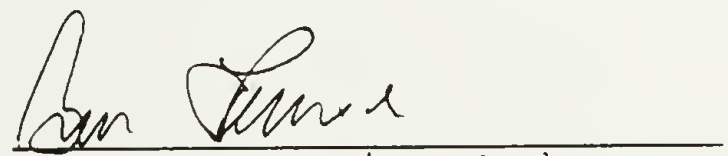

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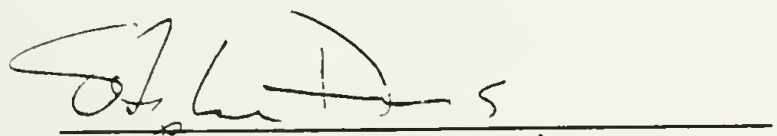

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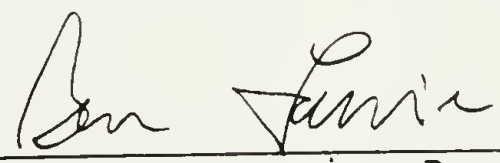

Bruce G. Laurie, Department Head
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# DEDICATION

For Sandy

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am very grateful for the personal and professional support of many people who stood by me throughout the process of writing this dissertation. It gives me great pleasure to be at the point where I can acknowledge them.

Milton Cantor has been the best of advisors--kind and gentle while expecting rigorous research and writing. He has always been available when I needed him yet never intruded in my own process. Bruce Laurie taught me a great deal in several graduate school courses, and then became a discerning reader of my dissertation. I have been constantly amazed at the generosity of Milton and Bruce in carefully reading and commenting on all the drafts. Their erudition and editorial skills greatly improved my writing. Sheldon Goldman of the Political Science Department and Stephen Arons of the Legal Studies Department graciously served on my dissertation committee as well. Their comments brought a fresh perspective to the topic.

The History Department has been my academic home for these past eight years. Paula Baker showed me history could be good fun intellectually, as well as how much hard work it takes to do it well. Barry Levy taught me how to do primary research. Paul Dosal taught me not to be afraid of using my heart to study history. Gerald McFarland was the first one to hear my fledgling thoughts for this dissertation and gave support when I needed it. I want to thank the History Department as a whole for its financial support, especially

a Bauer-Gordon Summer Research Grant that made me feel like a real historian for the first time. Thanks especially to Mary Wilson for all her support as graduate program director.

I have been travelling this path with a coterie of fellow graduate students who have shared the traumas and helped break the isolation dissertation writing engenders. Thank you to Larry Goldsmith, Tim Ashwell, Maggie Lowe, Sumita Chaterjee, Bruce Saxon, Margaret Orelup, Julie Foulkes, Anne Wood and K.G. Janayath.

Along the way, I have met scholars from other institutions with whom I have had fruitful discussions. They are Bruce Cohen, Tom Whalen and Michael Bonislawski. The scholar who helped me decide in 1987 to make the transition from law to academia is Gilda Zwerman. I was inspired by her commitment to teaching, research and social justice and thank her for the initial nudge and ongoing support.

I am blessed with a rich personal life that has nourished me throughout this process. I can study the past best when I am firmly grounded in the present. My deepest gratitude is to Sandy for her sustaining love and support. I work and write within an eccentric and loving household. Special thanks to Sandy, Jay, Jeanie, Richie, Anna and Libby for being themselves. My thanks also to Jan and Diane for giving me a home away from home on all my research trips to Boston.

ABSTRACT

THE POLITICS OF ANTICOMMUNISM
IN MASSACHUSETTS, 1930-1960

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This dissertation tells the story of how anticommunism operated on the state and local level in Massachusetts from the depression through the 1950s. Using analytic tools from both political history and social history, it asks: what initiatives were driven by anticommunism, who were the people behind these initiatives, why did they want to suppress political dissent, and where did their ideas originate.

The findings show that anticommunism on the state and local level was far more complex than has been appreciated. In Massachusetts, political ideas travel through a prism of class and ethnicity before taking shape as political actions. Neither the pluralist analysis of McCarthyism as a mass based movement from below, nor the revisionist analysis of McCarthyism as an elite rivalry over political power adequately explain what happened in Massachusetts.

A more accurate picture reveals pockets of anticommunist activity throughout the state. These pockets were peopled with conservative Yankees, professional anticommunists, Catholic legislators and opportunist labor leaders. However, the ideas driving each group were quite different. What this study shows is the usefulness of anticommunism in helping Americans find common political ground across class and ethnic differences. For most people it was a lot easier to agree on what was un-American than it was to agree on what was American.

Massachusetts anticommunists maintained an unbroken thread of activity throughout the period of this study, 1930 to 1960. Evidence of anticommunism and antiradicalism during the Second World War--expressed as opposition to conscientious objectors and support for the Christian Front--links the "little Red Scare" of the depression to postwar McCarthyism.

The same groups of people supported anticommunist initiatives during the cold war as had during the depression and war years. The Catholic Church continued to be the single most influential source of anticommunism. Union leaders used anticommunist Catholic labor doctrine to oust rivals from power within the electrical workers union. A legislative commission dominated by socially conservative Irish Democrats investigated subversion among liberal Yankees. Cold war anticommunism on the state level was driven by ethnic conflict not party rivalry.

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# CHAPTER 1

# INTRODUCTION

This tells the story of how anticommunism operated on the state and local level in Massachusetts from the depression through the early cold war. Using analytic tools from political history and social history, it asks: who were the people behind anticommunist initiatives, what was their rationale for suppressing political dissent, and where did their ideas originate? The findings are both expected and unexpected. In some instances, anticommunism in Massachusetts was similar to what other writers found elsewhere; in many others, it was not. Political ideas In Massachusetts travel through a prism of class and ethnicity before taking shape as political action.[1] Since no two states have quite the same configuration of local characteristics, the refraction of anticommunist ideology at the state and local level produced a far more complex history than has been appreciated.

To date, scholarship on anticommunism focuses primarily on the national level and on events during the early cold war, the period usually referred to as "McCarthyism." Two explanations for the emergence and virulence of McCarthyism have emerged from this work. Neither adequately explains what happened in Massachusetts.

Historians writing in the 1950s argued that McCarthyism is best understood as a mass based movement from below. To

Daniel Bell, Richard Hofstadter, and others, McCarthyism represented American totalitarianism. They characterized Senator McCarthy as a demagogue tapping into the same grass roots sentiments that had produced earlier Populist revolts against modernization. This interpretation is based primarily on psychoanalytic inference, an emerging field of study in the 1950s. Major analytic categories are loosely studied ethnicity and "status anxiety."[2]

In the late 1960s, political scientist Michael Paul Rogin shattered this analysis by examining voting records in the mid-West. He found McCarthy's electoral support came from industrial counties that elected traditional Democratic or Republican candidates, not from rural counties with Populist traditions. Revisionist historians who followed Rogin argue that McCarthyism was a product of conservative and liberal elites contending for political power. To them, Senator McCarthy was another player in the partisan power struggle between elites in Congress.[3] Most work done on McCarthyism since then accepts this revisionist framework as a starting point for focusing on a particular manifestation of anticommunism on the national level.[4]

Pluralists and revisionists both characterize McCarthyism as an outbreak of political repression in the early cold war years. Revisionists recognize previous episodes of anticommunism--the Red Scare after World War I and the "little" Red Scare during the late 1930s--but do not try to find links between them. Revisionists explain

McCarthyism as a product of contemporary events, specifically the cold war and conservative reaction to the New Deal. A recent work by Michael J. Heale, a British historian of U.S. political history, takes a longer view.[5] He argues that antiradicalism is an ideological imperative of American nationalism with deep roots in the political culture, and that McCarthyism is its most recent manifestation. A host of factors account for the virulence of McCarthyism, according to Heale, including "the incessant and complex interplay between popular opinion, private interest groups, and public officials." Thus, Heale sidesteps the top down vs bottom up debate of pluralists and revisionists.

Heale's analysis is helpful for this study. Anticommunism did not simply break out in Massachusetts with the rise of Joe McCarthy; rather, it was a constant undertow in the political culture of the state throughout the depression, the war years, and the early cold war. One question this study asks is how anticommunism changed during these three periods. In taking the "long view," the subject matter is expanded from "McCarthyism," the term generally used to denote the Red Scare in the early postwar period, to "anticommunism," a term that encompasses opposition to the activities and ideology of the Communist party as well as more general opposition to left-of-center liberal and radical ideas. In Massachusetts, anticommunist initiatives were about more than eradication of the Communist party;

they were also about anti-intellectualism and cultural hegemony.

Ellen Schrecker's introductory essay to *The Age of McCarthyism* sketches a new direction in the scholarship on McCarthyism.[6] Schrecker argues that the countersubversive tradition, standing alone, is not enough to explain the pervasiveness of McCarthyism. For her, McCarthyism was also "the mid-twentieth-century manifestation of a continuing backlash against the modern, secular world."[7] This echoes the concerns of pluralist historians who identified great anxiety in the lower middle class as a key force driving anticommunism. Such cultural factors account for the leading role of conservative institutions, like the Catholic Church, in shaping and promoting anticommunist initiatives on the state level.

Other than the work done on voting records, neither pluralists nor revisionists tested their interpretations with local studies. Until recently, the little work done on the state level concentrated on legislative investigations and enactment of repressive legislation.[8] Without benefit of studies that examine sources of state and local initiatives, historian Robert Griffith and others argue that anticommunism on the state level was "derivative" of national initiatives and that state legislatures "responded almost slavishly to the force of federal law and precedent and to the anxieties aroused by national leaders."[9] One local study, designed specifically to test this theory,

concludes that "the Communist issue did not originate on the national level and then spread to the states and localities."[10] Another, however, suggests that local anticommunism resulted from an "elite-led, federal campaign."[11]

The evidence from Massachusetts refutes the copycat thesis. On the state level, anticommunist initiatives were driven by local factors, such as ethnicity and class, as much as by national and international events. These local factors gave anticommunism in Massachusetts a particular character, just as local factors in other states gave anticommunism a particular character there. To explain anticommunism on the state and local level as being merely derivative of federal initiatives fails to capture the complexity and variation of anticommunist political culture.

Two examples from Massachusetts illustrate the falsity of Griffith's sweeping generalization. The conventional wisdom of revisionist historians is that anticommunism was, in part, a conservative backlash against New Deal policies. It was a way for Republicans to attack Democrats without having to attack New Deal programs that proved popular with voters. In Massachusetts, however, it was traditional Democrats, like James Michael Curley, who championed anticommunist initiatives. At the same time, these urban Democrats embraced New Deal programs and the growing power of the federal state. Chapters three and six explain why.

In 1950, Massachusetts workers in locals of a Communist-led union, United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America (UE), had to decide whether to stay with their union when it was expelled from the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) for failing to purge communists from its leadership, or to secede and join the staunchly anticommunist rival union, the International Union of Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers (IUE). It was a clear choice. In 1949, federal anticommunism was at an all-time high. President Truman's Loyalty Security Program had been in effect for three years, the denunciations of the House Committee on Un-American Activities garnered front page headlines, the leadership of the Communist party was on trial in Manhattan federal court, and Chinese Communists defeated the United States' ally, Chiang Kai-shek, amidst accusations of communist treachery in the State Department. Given the level of national rhetoric, one would expect anticommunism to carry the day in local union elections with workers bolting from the UE. This is not what happened. Twenty-eight Massachusetts locals remained in the ousted Communist-led UE, while only twelve locals voted to secede from the UE and join the anticommunist IUE. Chapter six explains what happened.

If conventional explanations do not describe what actually happened in Massachusetts, then what does? A more accurate picture depicts pockets of anticommunist activity. Some pockets were peopled with conservative Republicans,

reacting to and copying national anticommunist initiatives as Robert Griffith predicts. Some pockets were part of the "wide-ranging anti-Communist network" of the political right wing that Ellen Schrecker identifies.[12] Indeed, leaders of national, conservative organizations, like Sentinels of the Republic and the John Birch Society, lived in Massachusetts and were part of the Yankee elite. However, most pockets of anticommunist activity in Massachusetts, were peopled with socially conservative Irish Catholic Democrats and new immigrants.

Revisionist historians identified the political roots of anticommunism while ignoring its social roots. Their protagonists believed communism was subversive because it aimed to overthrow the government. These politically conservative anticommunists saw the growing power of the state as a dangerous prelude to communist takeover. By emphasizing politically conservative sources of anticommunism, revisionists overlook socially conservative sources of anticommunism. Other Americans, who were not politicians, opposed communism because they believed it was immoral. Led primarily by the Catholic hierarchy, they feared communism would replace Christian values with godless materialism. These socially conservative anticommunists saw the growing power of the state as a threat to the authority of the church.

Both politically conservative and socially conservative anticommunists used politics to fight communism. However,

social concerns are brought to politics more easily at the local level than at the national level. Since the revisionists studied anticommunism on the national level, it is not surprising that they missed localist, socially conservative sources of anticommunism. In Massachusetts, the political culture of anticommunism was socially constructed as much as it was politically constructed. Because the meaning of anticommunism was malleable enough to embrace both sources, it became enormously powerful in helping Americans find common ground across class and ethnic differences. With working class, middle class and ruling class allied to fight communism, reminders of class antagonism were branded un-American. When the national internal enemy was vanquished, along with it went class analysis leaving poor and working class people with no tools to confront underlying inequities.

The methodology of this study is straightforward. First I tried to identify as many anticommunist initiatives as possible; then, I worked backwards from these events to identify the people behind them. As much as possible, I have used the words and ideas of the actors themselves to explain their motivation. The next chapter paints a social portrait of Massachusetts during the period under investigation. The third chapter looks at anticommunist initiatives in the context of the depression, and the fourth chapter does the same thing in the context of international conflict and the Second World War. The fifth chapter

explores red-baiting in the labor movement and workers response to anticommunist rhetoric. The sixth chapter analyzes anticommunist initiatives in the state legislature and in local communities at the height of McCarthyism. The seventh chapter concludes the study by comparing the experience of Massachusetts to that of other states.

## Notes

[1]In other states, race and/or gender may also play significant roles in the operation of anticommunism at the local level. In the South, for instance, anticommunism was a powerful tool for segregationists to derail the Communist-led interracial movement for social justice in the 1940s and the black-led civil rights movement in the 1950s.

Race is not a determining characteristic of anticommunism in Massachusetts because there were so few African-Americans in the state from 1930-1960, and they were relatively powerless politically. When African-Americans do appear, they tend to be more tolerant of political dissent than their counterparts in white ethnic groups. From the research I have done, there were no major anticommunist players or spokesmen in the African-American community.

Scholars are just beginning to investigate the impact of gender on anticommunism. *See, e.g.*, Kate Weigand, "The Red Menace, the Feminine Mystique, and the Ohio Un-American Activities Commission: Gender and Anti-Communism in Ohio, 1951-1954," *Journal of Women's History* 3 (1992), No. 2, pp. 70-94. In Massachusetts, women were visible and active on both sides of the issue. I have not, however, uncovered any gender-driven explanations of anticommunist initiatives in the state.

[2]The classic work of this school is *The New American Right*, a collection of essays edited by Daniel Bell and published in 1955 by Criterion Books. This book was republished with additional essays in 1962 as *The Radical Right*. Contributors to the original edition included Bell, Richard Hofstadter, Talcott Parsons, Seymour Martin Lipset, and Peter Viereck. *See also*, Richard Hofstadter, *The Paranoid Style in American Politics and Other Essays* (New York: Knopf, 1965); Daniel Bell, *The End of Ideology: On the Exhaustion of Political Ideas in the Fifties* (Glencoe, Ill.: The Free Press, 1962); and Peter Viereck, *Shame and the Glory of the Intellectuals: Babbitt Jr. vs the Rediscovery of Values* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1953).

[3]Early works of the revisionists include Michael Paul Rogin, *The Intellectuals and McCarthy: The Radical Specter* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1967); Robert Griffith, *The Politics of Fear: Joseph R. McCarthy and the Senate* (Amherst, Mass.: University of Massachusetts Press, 1970, 1987); and Athan Theoharis, *Seeds of Repression: Harry S. Truman and the Origins of McCarthyism* (New York: Quadrangle Books, 1971). The antidote to Bell's *Radical Right* is a collection of essays edited by Griffith and Theoharis, *The Specter: Original Essays on the Cold War and the Origins of McCarthyism* (New York: Franklin Watts, 1974).

[4]The sprawling bibliography of McCarthyism includes books on the entertainment industry's response to McCarthyism, the career of Senator McCarthy, the role of Congressional committees, the labor movement and the Communist Party, prosecutions of communists, the FBI's shadowy role in fueling McCarthyism, liberal reaction to communism, and McCarthyism in higher education. For comprehensive bibliographical essays, see Ellen W. Schrecker, *No Ivory Tower: McCarthyism and the Universities* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986) and the introduction to the second edition of Robert Griffith's, *The Politics of Fear* (1987). David Caute's book, *The Great Fear: The Anti-Communist Purge Under Truman and Eisenhower* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1978) contains an exhaustive but unannotated bibliography.

[5]M. J. Heale, *American Anticommunism, Combating the Enemy Within, 1830-1970* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1990). For a similar analysis from a different perspective, see Michael Paul Rogin, *Ronald Reagan: The Movie and Other Episodes in Political Demonology* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987).

[6]Ellen Schrecker, *The Age of McCarthyism, A Brief History With Documents* (Boston: St. Martin's Press, 1994). Schrecker is presently at work on a full synthesis. This book is a college level textbook containing a collection of documents and an introductory essay. In the essay, Schrecker sets forth only the skeleton of a much fuller argument.

[7]Schrecker, *Age of McCarthyism*, p. 10.

[8]The earliest work on the state level is Walter Gellhorn, ed., *The States and Subversion* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1950). Other state and local studies include: James Truett Selcraig, *The Red Scare in the Midwest, 1945-1955, A State and Local Study* (Ann Arbor, Mich.: UMI Research Press, 1982); M.J. Heale, "Red Scare Politics: California's Campaign Against Un-American Activities, 1940-1970," *Journal of American Studies* 20 (1986), 5-32; Don E. Carleton, *Red Scare! Right-wing Hysteria, Fifties Fanaticism, and Their Legacy in Texas* (Austin: Texas Monthly Press, 1985); Ronald W. Johnson, "The Korean War Red Scare in Missouri," *Red River Valley Historical Review* 4 (Spring 1979), 72-86; Dale Rich Sorenson, "The Anticommunist Consensus in Indiana, 1945-1958," (Ph.D. dissertation, Indiana University, 1980; Thomas Michael Holmes, "The Specter of Communism in Hawaii, 1947-53," (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Hawaii, 1975); Ingrid Winter Scobie, "Jack B. Tenney: Molder of Anti-Communist Legislation in California, 1940-49," (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1970); Edward Robert

Long, "Loyalty Oaths in California, 1947-1952: The Politics of Anti-Communism" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, San Diego, 1981).

[9]Robert Griffith, "American Politics and the Origins of 'McCarthyism,'" in Griffith and Theoharis, eds., *The Specter*, pp. 14-15. *See also*, Robert Justin Goldstein, *Political Repression in Modern America* (Cambridge, Mass.: Schenkman Publishing Co., 1978), pp. 348-349, and Ellen Schrecker, *Age of McCarthyism*, pp. 41 and 71. Schrecker argues that anticommunism may have been even more extreme on the state and local level because close collaboration among people connected with the "anti-Communist network" provided expertise and information for anticommunists working on the state and local level.

[10]Selcraig, *Red Scare in the Midwest*, p. 150.

[11]Gary Paul Henrickson, "Minnesota in the 'McCarthy' Period: 1946-1954" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Minnesota, 1982).

[12]Schrecker, *Age of McCarthyism*, pp. 9-15, *passim*.

# CHAPTER 2

## A COMMONWEALTH OF IMMIGRANTS

Massachusetts is home to many symbols that define core values of America's political culture. The Mayflower Compact, Boston Tea party, Battle of Bunker Hill, minutemen and town meetings are part of every schoolchild's catechism of American history. These symbols of freedom and representative government were familiar anchors for the commonwealth as it grew and changed dramatically in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Massachusetts residents continue to celebrate Patriot's Day with a reenactment of the day the shot heard round the world was fired on the Lexington town common. Bostonians take a holiday in March to commemorate the day hated British troops withdrew from the city in 1776. By the twentieth century, however, there were far more immigrants than Yankees celebrating these patriotic high holy days. In 1930, when this study begins, two out of three Massachusetts residents were either immigrants or children of immigrants. Massachusetts, the proud symbol of America's Yankee heritage, had become a commonwealth of immigrants. Of course the original patriots were immigrants too, but this fact seemed lost on their Yankee descendants who felt besieged by the newcomers and clung tenaciously to their ancestry and past.

From 1930 to 1960, the period under investigation here, the tide of new immigration slowed considerably. At the same time, immigrants who decided to stay struggled to be incorporated into the social, political and economic life of the commonwealth. In the course of these struggles, immigrants both altered and were altered by the rich political culture in Massachusetts. They recast traditional political values and ideas to incorporate their experiences into those of eighteenth century Yankee patriots. There was a great deal at stake in this period of economic and political upheaval as both immigrants and Yankees struggled to define what it meant to be American. For most people, it was a lot easier to agree on what was un-American than it was to agree on what was American. Since they equated communism with un-Americanism, anticommunism became the common ground between Yankee and immigrant political culture.

As stated in chapter one, I have defined anticommunism as encompassing both specific opposition to the Communist party as well as more generalized opposition to ideas that threatened the established order. Before presenting the analysis of how anticommunism operated in Massachusetts, however, we need to know more about the respective social position of immigrants and Yankees, the players in this drama, and their political loyalties. We also need to know

more about the institutions that shaped their political values. These topics are the focus of this chapter.

## Immigrant Majority

Four million people lived in Massachusetts in 1930; by 1960, there were five million.[1] The great period of population growth in the commonwealth, caused by massive immigration in the late nineteenth century, was over. From 1840 to 1910, the population grew by at least twenty percent each decade; in the 1930s, growth dropped to only two percent; and in the 1940s and 1950s it climbed back to nine percent. Population growth was not spread evenly throughout the state. Older textile centers--Fall River, New Bedford, Lowell, Lawrence, and Holyoke--experienced a net decline from 1930 to 1960. While Boston grew slightly from 1930 to 1960, its suburbs, such as Medford and Newton, grew dramatically. As the overall population stabilized, the ratio of recent immigrants to native born decreased substantially. Table 2.1 summarizes these data.

Although immigrants came to Massachusetts from the four corners of the world, a few countries predominated. Before 1880, most immigrants came from the British Commonwealth, particularly Ireland and Canada, with the remainder coming from Germany and Sweden. In 1882, a new stream of immigrants began arriving from southern and eastern Europe, particularly Italy, Poland and Russia.[2] By 1930, the

Table 2.1 Percent of Massachusetts population born in U.S. and born abroad, 1900-1960

| | 1900 | 1930 | 1960 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Native born, native born parents | 38 | 33 | 61 |
| Native born, at least one foreign born parent | 32 | 41 | 27 |
| Foreign born | 30 | 26 | 11 |

Source: 1900, 1930, 1960 Census

country of origin of foreign stock in Massachusetts (meaning foreign born plus native born with at least one foreign born parent) in descending order of magnitude was: Ireland (20%), English-speaking Canada (14%), French-speaking Canada (12%), Italy (12%), England/Scotland/Wales (10%), Poland (7%), Russia (5%), Scandinavia (4%), Germany (3%) and Portugal (2%).[3]

It is no surprise to find that the Irish were the largest of all immigrant groups in Massachusetts in 1930. In fact, the percentage of Irish was even larger than the figure above indicates because census takers did not identify third and fourth generation immigrants. If they had been included in the foreign stock, the proportion of Irish in Massachusetts in 1930 would have been 20 to 25 percent of the total population. Of course, in urban areas the percentage was even higher. The figures in Appendix A bear this out. Not only were the Irish the largest

immigrant group, they had also been in Massachusetts the longest and were the most settled. Table 2.2 shows the percent of foreign stock that was second generation (children of immigrants) for different countries of origin and again, the Irish lead the list.

Table 2.2 Percent of Massachusetts foreign stock that is second generation (children of immigrants) by country of origin, 1930

| | |
|---|---|
| Ireland | 72 |
| Germany | 71 |
| French-speaking Canada | 66 |
| Poland | 62 |
| ALL | 62 |
| Italy | 61 |
| England/Scotland/Wales | 60 |
| Portugal | 58 |
| English-speaking Canada | 55 |
| Russia | 44 |

Source: 1930 Census

Immigrants who arrived in Massachusetts settled in urban areas all across the state. In 1930, 90 percent of the foreign stock lived in one of five metropolitan areas defined by the federal Census Bureau: Boston, Worcester, Springfield, Lawrence-Lowell, and Fall River-New Bedford. These metropolitan areas included center cities as well as smaller cities and towns surrounding them. Boston was by far the largest of these metropolitan areas and was home to over half the foreign stock in the state, as shown in Table 2.3. Immigrants did not spread evenly throughout these metropolitan areas. Different nationalities followed

| Table 2.3 Percent of all Massachusetts foreign stock living in Metropolitan Districts, 1930 | |
|---|---|
| Boston Metropolitan District | 55 |
| Boston city | 20 |
| Outside Boston | 35 |
| Worcester Metropolitan District | 9 |
| Worcester | 5 |
| Outside Worcester | 4 |
| Springfield-Holyoke Metropolitan District | 10 |
| In central cities | 5 |
| Outside central cities | 5 |
| Lawrence-Lowell Metropolitan District | 8 |
| In central cities | 5 |
| Outside central cities | 3 |
| New Bedford-Fall River Metropolitan District* | 8 |
| In central cities | 6 |
| Outside central cities | 2 |

*The Census Bureau includes Providence in this District as well. They are not included here.
Source: 1930 Census

relatives and jobs to different places in the state. For instance, while French-speaking Canadians went to textile cities, English-speaking Canadians went to commercial centers; Portuguese went to New Bedford and Fall River; Swedes to Worcester; Italians to Boston and Lawrence but not Lowell; Russians to Boston. One exception were the Irish who, by 1930, were a presence in every urban area in the state. These differing patterns of settlement meant that the ethnic makeup of urban areas varied considerably. Appendix A presents this data for cities of 50,000 or more.

Religion is another way to look at the ethnic diversity that defined Massachusetts from 1930 to 1960, although hard

data is very hard to find. In 1926, the U.S. Census Bureau conducted its third, and last, census of religious bodies. Unlike the population count made at the beginning of each decade, it was a census of religious organizations rather than a census of individuals. Data were collected by sending the pastor of every church and congregation a schedule to complete. Given this method of data collection, the accuracy of the census of religious bodies is even more dubious than the count of individuals. Nevertheless, it is of some value and is all that is available.

The 1926 census of religious bodies reported that there were 2.5 million church members in Massachusetts; that figure represents about 60 percent of the total population at that time.[4] Of the reported church members, 65 percent belonged to the Roman Catholic Church, 26 percent to various Protestant denominations, and 9 percent to Jewish congregations. Table 2.4 presents this breakdown in more detail.

Even though immigrants had numerical superiority in Massachusetts in 1930, Yankees clung doggedly to social and economic power. The key to maintaining this control was to keep the doors of key institutions firmly shut. Through the depression and well into the postwar era, the Yankee elite operated within a very insular world. Bound together by lifelong ties formed at prep schools, Ivy League colleges, and exclusive social clubs, these men controlled access to

Table 2.4 Number and percent of Massachusetts church members in denominations with 10,000 or more members, 1926

| | Number of church members | Percent of all church members |
|---|---|---|
| Roman Catholic | 1,629,424 | 65.2 |
| Jewish | 213,085 | 8.5 |
| Protestant, total | 657,695 | 26.3 |
| Congregational | 159,252 | 6.4 |
| Episcopal | 141,952 | 5.7 |
| Northern Baptist | 89,635 | 3.4 |
| Methodist | 84,929 | 3.4 |
| Unitarian | 28,203 | 1.1 |
| Lutheran | 20,887 | .8 |
| Universalist | 14,997 | .5 |
| Greek Orthodox | 13,452 | .5 |
| National Spiritualist | 11,805 | .4 |
| Presbyterian | 11,270 | .4 |
| Negro churches | 10,563 | .4 |
| Other | 70,750 | 2.8 |

Source: Census of Religious Bodies, 1926, Table 22

their ranks. Cultural identifiers--ancestry, religion, residence and schooling--necessarily excluded immigrants no matter how well educated or wealthy they were. Also excluded were native born white Americans without the right social credentials.

One way to look at the class structure in the commonwealth is through the 8,000 biographies collected in *Who's Who in Massachusetts*, a book published in 1940 by Larkin, Roosevelt & Larkin. The publishers, lacking none of their own hubris, subtitled the book: "A Volume Containing a Biographical History of Every Important Living Person in The

Commonwealth." It appears from the acknowledgements that information was gathered through the alumni offices at Harvard, MIT, Williams, Amherst, Simmons, Boston University and Babson. Other sources must have been polled as well since many entries do not include a reference to one of these colleges. It seems likely that professional organizations such as bar associations, medical associations, and academic associations were also consulted. Noticeably absent among the acknowledgements are any officials from Catholic colleges and fraternal organizations in the state.

A random sample of the biographies reveals that 75 percent of these "Important Living Persons" belonged to one of the high status Protestant religions (Episcopalian, Unitarian, or Congregational) while only nine percent of the sample are Catholic and five percent are Jewish. The sample is politically homogeneous as well--80 percent are Republicans, 10 percent are Democrats and 10 percent are Independent--and well educated, for nearly 80 percent went to college. Of the college graduates, 40 percent went to Harvard College or one of Harvard's graduate schools. Occupationally, the sample represents wealthy men in high status jobs: eight percent owned mills or other factories, 15 percent were managers or technical advisors, nearly 15 percent were bankers and investment advisors, nearly 20 percent were college professors or school administrators,

nearly one-third were doctors or lawyers. The remaining eight percent were artists, ministers, and small businessmen. The Catholic and Jewish men in the sample were in solidly middle class professional positions: lawyers, school administrators, engineers, and a dentist.[5]

What is remarkable about this sample is that Jews and Catholics, who constitute 75 percent of the church members in Massachusetts in 1926, make up only 15 percent of "Every Important Living Person" in 1940. On the other hand, Episcopalians, Congregationalists and Unitarians represent 13 percent of all church members, yet they are 75 percent of the "Important Living Persons." While these sources may lack statistical reliability, they point in the general direction of a society that permitted some movement to its middle ranks, but was very closed at the top.

A study that examines occupational mobility and ethnicity in Boston confirms this description.[6] Stephen Thernstrom set out to investigate social mobility in Boston from 1880 to 1970. He was interested particularly in which men changed their class--either up or down--over a lifetime of work. Thernstrom defined class on the basis of occupational category. Overall, he found that 25-30 percent of all semiskilled male workers and 20-25 percent of all unskilled male workers ended their working careers in white collar jobs. One exception was the depression generation--men just beginning their work life when the panic hit. The

unskilled and semiskilled workers among them were never able to catch up, and did not experience the same mobility as their fathers or sons.

While there was some prospect for upward mobility in occupational level, inherited social advantages counted most. If you started at the top, you were almost guaranteed to stay there throughout your working life. Approximately 95 percent of the men who started in high status white collar jobs ended their working career at the same level. If you started at the bottom, you might gain respectability, but certainly not wealth or power. It was very hard for a poor man's son to break into the top occupational ranks. Only nine percent of the sons whose fathers were skilled laborers and five percent of the sons whose fathers were unskilled laborers made it into high status white collar jobs. These data confirm the findings from the *Who's Who* sample: that men in high status jobs were most likely to be well-educated, Protestant, Yankees.

Thernstrom found variations in occupational mobility among different immigrant groups. Irish and Italian men were overrepresented at the level of semiskilled and unskilled workers as late as 1960. First generation Irish and Italians lagged behind other immigrant groups in occupational mobility, although the Irish did slightly better than Italians at finding low status white collar jobs, probably because of their language advantage. Middle-

class Irish men tended to work for other people in clerical jobs and as salesmen. They did not become private entrepreneurs, a position that would have given them more economic and social power. Sons of Jewish immigrants did extraordinarily well with 75 percent ending up in solidly middle class jobs at the end of their working career.

Thernstrom also compared job classification by religion. He found that while Catholic and Protestant working class men moved up the occupational ladder at the same rate, Catholic white collar workers skidded down to blue collar jobs much more often than Protestant men did. He also found that sons of middle class Protestant men were much more likely to end their careers in high status white collar jobs than sons of middle class Catholic men. These numbers corroborate the conclusions drawn from the *Who's Who* sample.

Thernstrom concludes Irish and Italian men were locked out of white collar jobs by the cultural values of peasant life they brought with them to the New World. According to Thernstrom, immigrants' "attitudes towards education, work, thrift and consumption" determined occupational patterns of their sons. This explanation ignores the impenetrability of Yankee society. Where you got a job depended on who you knew; who you knew depended on where you went to school and where you lived; where you went to school and where you lived depended on where your father went to school and where

you grew up. Massachusetts was not a meritocracy in the thirty years from 1930 to 1960. As more and more immigrants flooded into the commonwealth in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Yankee elites kept access to high status jobs closed to newcomers.

The case of Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti illustrates best the deep gulf separating Yankees and immigrants.[7] Sacco and Vanzetti were Italian immigrants charged in 1920 with robbing the payroll of a South Braintree shoe factory and killing the paymaster and guard. Both men were anarchists; both men were armed when they were arrested on a street car late at night. From the moment of their arrest, police treated them as dangerous radicals. Sacco was a shoe worker and Vanzetti a fish peddler. While both defendants had solid alibis, all their corroborating witnesses were Italian immigrants like themselves.

Judge Webster Thayer, a 70 year old Yankee patrician who presided over the six week trial held in Dedham in 1921, was widely reported to have made comments such as "I'll get the bastards." Compounding Thayer's bias, the prosecutors were much better lawyers than the defense attorneys. Both Sacco and Vanzetti testified on their own behalf. Neither man used an interpreter making them easy prey for the prosecutor who belittled their alibis and hammered home inconsistent statements they made to police interrogators. They were painted as un-American foreigners who carried

weapons and fled to Mexico to avoid fighting in World War I. Although Sacco tried to explain his anarchist beliefs to the jury, the language barrier and ineptness of his lawyers made him look more like a criminal than a political prisoner.

The jury convicted Sacco and Vanzetti of first degree murder and Thayer sentenced them to death. There was some local publicity of the case during the trial, mostly negative. After Thayer pronounced the death sentence, radicals and liberals all over the world rallied to Sacco and Vanzetti's defense. New defense lawyers began a lengthy appeal process as criticism of the trial mounted nationally and internationally. All appeals were eventually denied. People all over the world petitioned Republican Governor Alvan Fuller to grant Sacco and Vanzetti executive clemency. In 1927, Fuller responded by appointing a three man advisory committee--consisting of Harvard president A. Lawrence Lowell, MIT president Samuel Stratton, and former probate judge Robert A. Grant--to review the evidence for him, and by postponing the execution date while the Lowell committee held hearings. Over the course of ten days, the committee heard from representatives of the prosecution and defense, Judge Thayer, jurors, and alibi witnesses. Lowell assumed the role of prosecutor, impeaching the recollection of a critical alibi witness. The Lowell Committee concluded that Sacco and Vanzetti received a fair trial, paving the way for the execution.

In August 1927, as the Lowell Committee held hearings and courts heard final appeals, multitudes of Sacco and Vanzetti supporters kept vigil. Boston police, dressed in full riot gear, guarded the city. Thousands rallied daily on Boston Common; hundreds of picketers were arrested in front of the state house. Celebrities like Katherine Anne Porter and Edna St. Vincent Milay joined radicals, liberals, workers, mothers, Beacon Hill matrons, college students, artists and writers to demand clemency. When all appeals failed, Sacco and Vanzetti were executed. Thousands of mourners filed through a small Italian funeral home to pay their last respects; ten thousand more followed the coffins to Forest Hills cemetery.

The case of Sacco and Vanzetti became an epic struggle between Yankee authority and immigrant aspirations. To Judge Thayer and his generation of Yankee patriarchs, Sacco and Vanzetti were ungrateful, disloyal foreigners bent on destroying everything they and their forefathers had sacrificed to build. To newer immigrants, Sacco and Vanzetti were victims of imperious, prejudiced Yankees incapable of understanding the plight of working men and women. The case stood as an allegory of the great divide between Yankees and immigrants in Massachusetts.

## Party Politics

The one public arena where the numerical superiority of immigrants worked to their advantage was party politics.

When voters went to the ballot box, it did not matter whether they had been in Massachusetts for ten generations or ten weeks. Of the foreign born, the Irish were best situated to capitalize on this fact because they had been in Massachusetts the longest and were the largest immigrant group. Also, they brought with them exposure to Anglo-American political traditions. By the late nineteenth century, Irish immigrants were firmly situated in the Democratic party in opposition to the Yankee controlled Republican party. Municipal ward politics became the one stepping stone to local power and prestige for Irish immigrants. Hugh O'Brien, the first Irish Mayor of Boston, was elected in 1885. With political power came access to patronage jobs and respectability for Irish politicians.[8]

The first successful Irish candidate in a statewide race was David Walsh, who was elected lieutenant governor in 1912. Walsh was the son of a skilled hornsmith who emigrated to Massachusetts in the early 1850s. His family valued education highly, graduating all ten children from high school. Supported by two unmarried sisters, who worked at the Bigelow Carpet factory, Walsh graduated from Holy Cross College and Boston University Law School. After practicing law in Fitchburg for several years as a plaintiff's attorney for injured workmen, Walsh turned to politics as his primary vocation. Not only was he the first Irish Catholic to be elected lieutenant governor, he was

also the first Democrat to hold that office since the founding of the Republican party. Walsh was elected governor the next year, 1913, when the Republicans split over the candidate from Theodore Roosevelt's Progressive party. In 1918, Walsh joined Henry Cabot Lodge in Washington, D.C. as a Bay State Senator. His early successes at winning statewide elections were due, in part, to the fact that he was not a typical urban Irish politician. Hailing from Clinton, a small industrial town about 40 miles west of Boston, Walsh worked his way up through the local Democratic party, earning the respect and allegiance of Yankee Democrats like Joseph Ely from Westfield.[9]

Another ambitious Irish politician at this time was James Michael Curley of Boston. For Bay State Yankees, Curley was "that man" long before Franklin D. Roosevelt was elected to the Presidency. The son of a widowed scrubwoman, Curley learned the ropes of Boston's ward politics early on, parlaying that knowledge into a lifelong career as a Massachusetts politician. Lacking the formal education of Walsh, Curley was a self taught, spellbinding orator with an Irish voice of honey. He first won elective office as a representative to the Massachusetts legislature in 1902. During his fifty year political career, he served as alderman, congressman, mayor of Boston for four terms and governor for one term. Curley's career was also marked with

scandal, twice serving time in prison for municipal fraud. He was known as much for his loyal followers as his powerful enemies.[10] Within state politics, Curley was always at odds with David Walsh who had much more power within the state Democratic party.

Neither Curley nor any other Irish politician in Massachusetts could build a political machine on the scale of Tammany Hall in New York. Ward politics in Boston was so "feudal" that no politician could gain hegemony over his rivals. Within Boston, Curley competed with other powerful Irish politicians, such as Martin Lomasney and John "Honey Fitz" Fitzgerald, for control of city politics. Each political boss controlled neighborhoods, but none was able to dominate all rivals.[11] This meant that while politics was a stepping stone for individual, ambitious Irishmen, it held an insecure future at best. It also meant that no politician would be able to wield more than temporary, local power against the entrenched Yankee elite.

The political antics at the 1932 Democratic National Convention illustrate well the diffusion of power among Irish politicians in Massachusetts. The state delegation, led by Walsh, was committed to Al Smith, the adopted favorite son of Bay State Democrats. Curley, sensing a shift in political fortune, was the most prominent Massachusetts Democrat to break with Smith and endorse Franklin Roosevelt during the 1932 primary. Curley arrived

at the Democratic National Convention in August without delegate credentials. While the official Massachusetts delegation defiantly cast its votes for Al Smith, even after the tide turned decisively toward Roosevelt on the fourth ballot, Curley's unmistakable Irish brogue boomed from the convention hall as "Don Jaime Miguel Curleo," chairman of the Puerto Rican delegation, triumphantly voting for Roosevelt.[12]

Politics was a tool of power--albeit it fairly limited power--primarily for Irish immigrants. Once in power, the Irish succeeded in keeping Italians and Jews out of urban Democratic party machines, although all ethnic groups succeeded in electing their own to some local offices, often on the Republican ticket.[13]

From 1900 to 1930, party loyalty remained strong in Massachusetts. Both parties devised strategies to attract new voters to their ranks. The Republican party remained solidly Yankee after the Civil War, and recruited Jewish voters with policies that benefited businessmen and African American voters with its legacy of abolitionism. Republican protectionist policies attracted immigrant voters, such as French Canadians, looking for work in mills and factories. The Democratic party was just as solidly urban Irish, with some rural Yankees. The Irish controlled Boston's local politics, leaving the Yankees to run candidates for statewide offices. Italians supported Democratic candidates

but their participation in electoral politics was very low. The two parties competed vigorously for votes of newer immigrants by running candidates with immigrant names for lesser positions on party slates and by rewarding key supporters with patronage jobs.[14]

The presidential election of 1928 turned Massachusetts back into a two party state after eight decades of Republican domination. Al Smith's candidacy began a transformation of the Democratic party into the dominant political party in the state. Although political scientists point to this election as a critical realignment in Massachusetts politics, it was foreshadowed by David Walsh's 1926 statewide victory and not consolidated for another decade. Walsh ran better than any Democratic candidate before him, in part because the Republicans had so little to offer immigrant voters during the 1920s. The party's association with Prohibition, one hundred percent Americanism, and the Ku Klux Klan drove immigrants into David Walsh's coalition. Walsh carried wards of newer immigrants that had never voted Democratic before such as French Canadian districts in shoe and textile cities, Jewish neighborhoods in greater Boston, and African American quarters in Boston. But Walsh's victory was not the turning point in the realignment process. Even though he squeaked by to beat William Butler, Republicans still maintained control of the governor's office and both houses of the

state legislature. Walsh's 1926 victory demonstrated what was possible, not what was. He won because immigrant voters and Yankee Democrats respected him and supported the issues he represented.[15]

Two years later, these same voters embraced Al Smith, the son of Irish and Italian immigrants who rose through Democratic party ranks to the governor's mansion in New York. The 1928 election, more than any other, reflected the depth of class and ethnic cleavages in the commonwealth. The two candidates--Herbert Hoover and Al Smith--gave voters a crystal clear choice between old stock Protestant Americanism, with its policies of economic conservatism, Prohibition and immigration restriction, and new immigrant Americanism, with its policies of religious pluralism, reform, and ethnic pride. Both parties knew the election would be won or lost on immigrant votes. An amazing 94 percent of all registered voters in Massachusetts went to the polls in November 1928. Smith narrowly carried the day with 50.5 percent of the vote.[16]

Smith's victory was just a step in the electoral realignment process in Massachusetts. It took another decade for immigrant voters, who switched parties to vote for Smith, to register as Democrats and vote regularly for Democratic candidates. Gerald Gamm's study of presidential election voting behavior in Boston examines this twenty year process, from 1920 to 1940, for different ethnic groups.

Jews made the most dramatic shift from the ranks of the Republican party to the Democratic party. In the process of becoming heavily Democratic, class distinctions among Jewish voters disappeared. No longer did Jewish businessmen vote differently from Jewish workers. Italians were not so much realigned during this period as recharged. Italians who voted in the Progressive era and the 1920s supported Democratic party candidates; however, not until the New Deal coalition brought them concrete benefits did Italians begin to vote in large numbers. In addition to mobilizing more men, Italian women finally registered to vote in the 1930s. Among African Americans in Boston, women abandoned the Republican party much earlier than men, and registered to vote in larger numbers than men. Boston-born Black men tended to remain loyal to the Republican party while newer arrivals from the South tended to register as Democrats. Among the Yankees and Irish, there was no realignment. Yankees remained solidly Republican although they became politically demobilized with fewer and fewer turning out to vote. The Irish remained solidly Democratic. New recruits were found among Irish women in the 1920s. Like Jews, Gamm found no class cleavage in Irish voting patterns. Middle class Irish voters and working class Irish voters both supported Democratic party candidates in impressively large numbers.[17]

Gamm's conclusion that ethnicity, not class, defined the New Deal coalition in Boston rests on a narrowly conceived definition of class. Gamm used what was available to him, traditional material measures of income such as "the value of owned homes, the monthly rent of rental units, the number of families owning mechanical refrigerators, the number of homes centrally heated, and the level of education attained by adults," to identify lower class, middle class and upper class voters among Jews, Italians, Blacks, Yankees and Irish.[18] However, class in Boston was determined by more than mere income. Immutable characteristics, such as family name, and cultural identifiers, such as speech patterns, appearance, and hobbies, were what got you into Groton or Harvard, not the ability to pay the bills. Graduates of Harvard, not Boston College, filled corporate board rooms. The "shabby gentility"--poor Yankees from once wealthy families--had more access to power than most wealthy Irishmen. Yankee elites discriminated against upper income Irish and Jewish immigrants as much as they did against their working class relatives. In 1930, ethnicity and class were the same thing in Massachusetts.

From 1930 to 1960, immigrants coalesced in the Democratic party and went head-to-head with Yankees in the one public arena available to them--politics. Throughout the process of realignment, however, crossover voting was common. Votes for Franklin Roosevelt were not necessarily

votes for local Democratic party candidates. Ethnic rivalry and anti-Irish sentiment among newer immigrant groups continued to animate the Republican party throughout this period. Because of their greater numbers, Irish politicians dominated Democratic party machinery in urban areas throughout the state where immigrants lived and voted. They dispensed patronage jobs and municipal contracts to their kinsmen, not other immigrant groups. Italians, Jews and French Canadians lacked enough votes to contest Irish domination. Republicans courted their votes, making sure names of newer immigrants appeared on their ticket. While newer immigrant voters supported national Democratic candidates, like Al Smith and Franklin Roosevelt, locally they supported the party that met their needs.

Electoral power gradually shifted from center cities, where immigrant voting was most cohesive, to emerging middle-class suburbs, where second and third generation immigrants were less likely to identify as ethnic Americans or with ethnic issues. Table 2.5 shows which party controlled political offices in Massachusetts from 1930 to 1960. It graphically demonstrates the high degree of crossover voting and continuing efficacy of the Republican party.

Several factors account for the fact that the Massachusetts legislature remained solidly Republican until the end of the 1950s. After 1932, factionalism crippled

Table 2.5 Party control of political office in Massachusetts, 1930-1960

| | Gov. | Lieut. Gov. | Att'y Gen'l | State Senate | State House |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1931-32 | **Democ.** | *Repub.* | *Repub.* | *Repub.* | *Repub.* |
| 1933-34 | **Democ.** | *Repub.* | *Repub.* | *Repub.* | *Repub.* |
| 1935-36 | **Democ.** | **Democ.** | **Democ.** | *Repub.* | *Repub.* |
| 1937-38 | **Democ.** | **Democ.** | **Democ.** | *Repub.* | *Repub.* |
| 1939-40 | *Repub.* | *Repub.* | **Democ.** | *Repub.* | *Repub.* |
| 1941-42 | *Repub.* | *Repub.* | *Repub.* | *Repub.* | *Repub.* |
| 1943-44 | *Repub.* | *Repub.* | *Repub.* | *Repub.* | *Repub.* |
| 1945-46 | **Democ.** | *Repub.* | Repub. | *Repub.* | *Repub.* |
| 1947-48 | *Repub.* | *Repub.* | *Repub.* | *Repub.* | *Repub.* |
| 1949-50 | **Democ.** | **Democ.** | **Democ.** | Even | **Democ.** |
| 1951-52 | **Democ.** | **Democ.** | **Democ.** | *Repub.* | **Democ.** |
| 1953-54 | *Repub.* | *Repub.* | *Repub.* | *Repub.* | *Repub.* |
| 1955-56 | *Repub.* | *Repub.* | *Repub.* | *Repub.* | *Repub.* |
| 1957-58 | **Democ.** | **Democ.** | *Repub.* | *Repub.* | **Democ.** |
| 1959-60 | **Democ.** | **Democ.** | **Democ.** | **Democ.** | **Democ.** |

Source: Latham, *Massachusetts Politics*, p.13

the Democratic party on both the state and local level. When Curley endorsed Roosevelt, he split with the Walsh-Ely wing of the party which still controlled the party's organization. In 1934, Curley challenged Walsh and Ely's control by running in the primary against their candidate. Although Curley won the primary, and the election, he was never able to consolidate power and rebuild an efficient state organization. After 1934, Ely withdrew from party politics, joining ultra conservatives to attack the New Deal; Walsh became a national voice for isolationism, openly challenging Roosevelt's foreign policy. Left "rudderless," the party ran questionable candidates and became mired in scandal.[19] Factionalism also crippled local Democratic

party organizations. Economic distress brought on by the depression exacerbated interethnic hostility as different groups competed for access to New Deal jobs and programs.[20]

## Catholic Church

Along with their growing power at the ballot box, immigrants had access to one institution beyond the reach of Yankee control, the Catholic Church. When Massachusetts celebrated the church's one hundredth anniversary in 1908, Boston Archbishop William Henry O'Connell (later to become Cardinal) delivered a sermon extolling the amazing growth of the church at the centennial service attended by Bay State Yankee leaders as well as Catholic dignitaries. O'Connell recalled the often fractious history of descendants of Pilgrims and Catholic immigrants and then noted all the changes that had taken place. He concluded: "The Puritan has passed; the Catholic remains."[21] That is exactly what Yankee elites feared the most.

By 1930, Cardinal O'Connell was a well known figure in Massachusetts life. Internationally, he had close ties to Vatican leaders; nationally, he was dean of the American bishops; locally, he presided over a "million member archdiocese."[22] William O'Connell was born in Lowell to a large Irish immigrant family. His father maintained steady work in the mills while his older brothers found semi-skilled and skilled work in the industrial town. As the youngest of six sons, William had the opportunity to attend high school and

college. After graduating from Boston College, he attended seminary in Rome at the American College and later returned to serve as its rector for five years. O'Connell's close association with the Vatican shaped his cosmopolitan tastes, his authoritarian temperament, and his Old World view of the Church's role in society. O'Connell's message to his flock was very conservative. He opposed baseball games on Sunday, lipstick on women, plays by George Bernard Shaw and popular crooners on the radio. As a militant Catholic, he believed that the Church was the only institution capable of leading the masses away from the immorality of modern life which he blamed on Bolshevism, socialism, and popular culture.

After becoming archbishop of Boston in 1907, O'Connell quickly moved to consolidate his power among priests in the archdiocese. He personally purchased the failing weekly newspaper of the archdiocese, *The Pilot*, and became its publisher, controlling content and editorial policy. O'Connell used the pages of *The Pilot* to preach his fervent anticommunist views directly to his flock. In 1929, O'Connell inaugurated the Catholic Truth Hour, a Sunday afternoon radio series featuring lectures--cleared in advance by the Cardinal--from prominent Catholic educators. O'Connell promoted talks on the evils of communism through this medium as well.

O'Connell rarely intervened directly in political matters, preferring to cultivate an image of neutrality in

temporal matters. He maintained a safe distance from controversial Irish Catholic politicians like James Michael Curley and John F. Fitzgerald. By temperament, he was more comfortable with Yankee patrician politicians and voted Republican. O'Connell did not bother his good friend Governor Alvan Fuller with a clemency appeal for Italian anarchists Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti, until directed to do so by the papal secretary of state two weeks before the execution. The one exception to O'Connell's noninvolvement in politics was when he thought the state was legislating morality; an area, he believed, that was the sole province of the church. In 1924, for instance, O'Connell campaigned aggressively against a proposed constitutional amendment to prohibit child labor. For him, the amendment was immoral because it usurped family and spiritual authority by substituting the will of "a centralized bureaucracy more in keeping with communism than the base-rock principles of American government." In 1935, when the amendment resurfaced, O'Connell's spokesman admonished Catholics that "nothing Redder ever came out of Red Russia."

Following O'Connell's leadership, the Catholic Church in Massachusetts fervently opposed anything that smacked of even liberalism. O'Connell kept the church's own liberal organization, the National Catholic Welfare Conference, from gaining a foothold in Massachusetts. When O'Connell died in

1944, he was succeeded by Richard Cushing, a man born and raised in a middle class Irish family in South Boston, who was as likeable and out-going as O'Connell was solemn and aloof. Cushing was photographed kissing babies, throwing footballs, and riding with nuns on the roller coaster at Revere Beach. He was well suited to the church's more secular image and role in mid-twentieth century America. Although cut from different cloth, Cardinal Cushing was just as anticommunist as Cardinal O'Connell. While O'Connell's anticommunism was rooted in papal encyclicals, Cushing's anticommunism was rooted in the politics of the cold war.

O'Connell and Cushing's leadership ensured that the immigrant majority in Massachusetts would hear plenty about the evils of communism from their church. What Catholics heard from the pulpit was that there could be no compromise with communism. From the Pope down to the parish priest, the church taught that communism was a rival religion that must be destroyed before it destroyed the church. What this study will show is that the Catholic Church was the most ubiquitous source of anticommunism on the state and local level in Massachusetts.

## Conclusion

In 1930, as this study opens, Catholic immigrants and their children were a clear majority of residents in Yankee Massachusetts. Lacking access to social or economic power, immigrants used their voting power to transform Bay State

politics from a one party state to a two party state. No longer would the Yankee controlled Republican party be assured of dominating public policy in Massachusetts. As party politics became more competitive, it became clearer that the cleavage between Republicans and Democrats was based on ethnicity and class. In the 1930s, Irish Catholic Democrats thought communism was a much greater problem than erosion of civil liberties, while moderate Yankee Protestant Republicans thought just the opposite. The next chapter focuses on the depression era conflict between immigrant sensibilities and Brahmin prerogatives over the question of communism.

## Notes

[1]All population statistics are taken from the 1930, 1940 and 1950 Census unless otherwise noted.

[2]Earl Latham and George Goodwin, Jr., *Massachusetts Politics* (Medford, Mass.: Tufts Civic Education Center, 1960), pp. 3-4.

[3]The rich scholarship on ethnicity in Massachusetts includes works by historians, political scientists, sociologists and anthropologists. Oscar Handlin's *Boston's Immigrants, A Study in Acculturation* (New York: Athenaeum Press, 1970) is the classic study of nineteenth century ethnic conflict between Yankees and Irish. In this work, Handlin breaks with the assimilationist interpretation of consensus historians and argues that the Irish maintained their own culture that conflicted with Yankee culture.

For the Irish, *see also* Thomas H. O'Connor, *The Boston Irish: A Political History* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1995); Thomas N. Brown, *Irish American Nationalism 1870-1890* (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott Co., 1966), Donna Merwick, *Boston Priests, 1848-1910, A Study in Social and Intellectual Change* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1973) and Dennis P. Ryan, *Beyond the Ballot Box, A Social History of the Boston Irish, 1845-1917* (Rutherford, N.J.: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1983).

Other ethnic groups in Massachusetts have not been researched as much as the Irish. For Italians, see William M. De Marco, *Ethnics and Enclaves, Boston's Italian North End* (Ann Arbor, Mich.: UMI Research Press, 1981); for Jews, see Lawrence Fuchs, *Political Behavior of American Jews* (Glencoe, Ill.: The Free Press, 1956); for French Canadians, see Ronald A. Petrin, *French Canadians in Massachusetts Politics, 1885-1915, Ethnicity and Political Pragmatism* (Philadelphia: The Balch Institute Press, 1990).

Recently, labor historians have produced the best works on ethnicity on New England. *See, e.g.* William F. Hartford, *Working People of Holyoke, Class and Ethnicity in a Massachusetts Mill Town, 1850-1960* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1990); Gary Gerstle, *Working-Class Americanism, The Politics of Labor in a Textile City, 1914-1960* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989); Marc Scott Miller, *The Irony of Victory: World War II and Lowell, Massachusetts* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988); Mary H. Blewett, Ed., *Surviving Hard Times: The Working People of Lowell* (Lowell, Mass.: Lowell Museum, 1982); Tamara K. Hareven, *Family Time and Industrial Time: The Relationship between the Family and Work in a New England Industrial Community* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press,

1982); John T. Cumbler, *Working Class Community in Industrial America: Work, Leisure, and Struggle in Two Industrial Cities, 1880-1930* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1979).

For a sociological perspective, see N.J. Demerath, III and Rhys H. Williams, *A Bridging of Faith: Religion and Politics in a New England City* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992); for an anthropologist's perspective, see June C. Nash, *From Tank Town to High Tech: The Clash of Community and Industrial Cycles* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989).

[4]The total population was figured by adding six-tenths of the increase from 1920 to 1930 to the 1920 figure.

[5]This random sample consists of 86 biographies. The first full biography containing specific religious denomination was taken from every tenth page. If religious denomination was not given in the first full biography or was listed generically as "Protestant," the next biography was used instead.

[6]Stephen Thernstrom, *The Other Bostonians, Poverty and Progress in the American Metropolis, 1880-1970* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1973). Thernstrom was a pioneer in the field of quantitative analysis. His results have been dissected and often criticized by a generation of later historians. The principal complaint is that quantitative analysis is too limited, that numbers alone do not tell the whole story. See, Hubert S. Nelli's review in *the Journal of American History*, volume 62 (1975), pages 421-422 and Kenneth T. Jackson's review in the *American Historical Review*, volume 80 (1975), pages 513-514. I use Thernstrom's numbers in the context of other data that does put flesh and bones on the numbers. Also, I am only using Thernstrom's numbers in the discussion that follows since I disagree with his interpretation of the data.

[7]The following account is from Roberta Strauss Feuerlicht, *Justice Crucified: The Story of Sacco and Vanzetti* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1977); Robert H. Montgomery, *Sacco-Vanzetti: The Murder and The Myth* (Boston: Western Islands, 1960); and Harold Blumenfeld, *Sacco and Vanzetti: Murderers or Murdered?* (New York: Scholastic Books, 1972).

[8]Latham and Goodwin, *Massachusetts Politics*, pp. 4-5.

[9]There is only one biography of David Walsh, Dorothy Wayman's *David I. Walsh, Citizen-Patriot* (Milwaukee: Bruce

Publishing Co., 1952). It is a celebratory work not a critical one, and by now quite dated.

[10]There are several works on James Michael Curley. His autobiography is *I'd Do It Again, a Record of My Uproarious Years* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1957), much of which seems to have been taken from an earlier biography by Joseph F. Dineen, *The Purple Shamrock, the Honorable James Michael Curley of Boston* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1949). The accuracy of both books is selective at best. A recent biography by journalist Jack Beatty, *The Rascal King: the Life and Times of James Michael Curley, 1874-1958* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1992), is more comprehensive and accurate in its treatment of Curley's life.

[11]*See, e.g.*, Leslie G. Ainley, *Boston Mahatma: Martin Lomasney* (Boston: Bruce Humphries, 1949) and John Henry Cutler, *"Honey Fitz" Three Steps to the White House: The Colorful Life and Times of John F. (Honey Fitz) Fitzgerald* (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1962).

[12]J. Joseph Huthmacher, *Massachusetts People and Politics, 1919-1933* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1959), pp. 232-239.

[13]*See, e.g.*, Petrin, *French Canadians*, pp. 95-127.

[14]On twentieth century party politics in Massachusetts, see Huthmacher, *Massachusetts People*; Edgar Litt, *The Political Cultures of Massachusetts* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1965); Charles H. Trout, *Boston, The Great Depression, and The New Deal* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977); and Gerald H. Gamm, *The Making of New Deal Democrats: Voting Behavior and Realignment in Boston, 1920-1940* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989).

[15]Huthmacher, *Massachusetts People*, pp. 117-149.

[16]Huthmacher, *Massachusetts People*, pp. 150-180; Litt, *Political Cultures*, pp. 34-39.

[17]Gamm, *New Deal Democrats, passim.*

[18]Gamm, *New Deal Democrats*, p. 212.

[19]Huthmacher, *Massachusetts People*, pp. 262-265.

[20]Trout, *Boston*, pp. 257-258.

[21]This discussion of Cardinals O'Connell and Cushing is based on James M. O'Toole, *Militant and Triumphant, William Henry O'Connell and the Catholic Church in Boston, 1859-1944* (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1992); Robert E. Sullivan and James M. O'Toole, eds., *Catholic Boston: Studies in Religion and Community, 1870-1970* (Boston: Roman Catholic Archbishop of Boston, 1985); Thomas A. McAvoy, C.S.C., *A History of the Catholic Church in America* (Notre Dame, Ill.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1969).

[22]The Boston Archdiocese included Lowell and Lawrence in the north and New Bedford and Fall River in the South. It extended west through suburban Boston stopping short of Worcester. In 1930, there was only one other diocese in the state and that included Worcester and the western part of the state. Later, Worcester and Springfield were divided into two separate dioceses.

# CHAPTER 3

## REDS, PINKS AND CRACKPOT PROFESSORS IN THE DEPRESSION

The economic downturn began in Massachusetts right after World War I. Throughout the 1920s, shoe factories and textile mills moved South at an alarming rate, leaving one-industry cities like New Bedford and Lowell badly distressed. Manufacturing declined twice as fast in the state as in Boston. At first Boston fared better than the rest of the commonwealth because it was predominantly a commercial and financial center; however, the economic downturn in the periphery soon affected the Hub as well. When the stock market crashed in 1929, Massachusetts was already struggling.

An early indication of overriding economic worries among voters came in May 1930 when the Second Congressional District, encompassing Springfield and surrounding industrial and manufacturing cities in western Massachusetts, elected a Democrat to Congress for the first time in forty years. The Democrat ran on a platform that called for the federal government to step in and help with economic hard times the region experienced.[1] By October 1930, only 60 percent of the state's work force had full-time jobs.

Throughout 1931 and 1932, Massachusetts communities struggled to meet basic needs of the unemployed, while the

Hoover Administration promised recovery was just around the corner. In December 1932, the American Federation of Labor reported that 30 percent of Boston's work force was out of work. The average, however, masked the unevenness of unemployment in Boston. Unskilled African Americans, Italians and Irish were much more likely to be unemployed than Back Bay Yankees. Although public relief skyrocketed, 75 percent of the jobless had no relief at all.[2] Boston's mayor, James Michael Curley, advocated public works to meet the crisis, but was stymied by a hostile Republican legislature unwilling to allocate necessary funds. In 1933, Curley headed a nationwide mayors' committee to petition Hoover and Congress for a $5 billion federal public works program.[3]

Federal spending programs of the New Deal did not bring relief to Massachusetts until late in the 1930s. In 1933, Washington gave Boston only $1.9 million in relief funds, the equivalent of one week's worth of public welfare expenditures, and the Public Works Administration did not begin any projects in Boston until 1935. By the late 1930s, the state finally began PWA building projects such as public housing, the Huntington Avenue subway line, roads and bridges. Massachusetts received little direct relief from the federal government because Governor Ely, a Democrat from western Massachusetts and a rival of Mayor Curley, did not lobby the Republican controlled legislature to authorize matching funds necessary to qualify for federal relief.

When funds came in, however, Curley ignored federal guidelines angering New Deal bureaucrats in Washington.[4]

In Boston and other urban areas, unemployed workers competed with each other for jobs created by New Deal programs. The AFL used its influence to make sure federal projects created skilled jobs for unemployed union members in the building trades, its biggest constituency. Irish project directors discriminated against Italian workers; Italians discriminated against African-Americans. In this context of dire economic need for many, and fierce competition among unskilled workers for a dwindling supply of jobs, initiatives to rid the state of reds, pinks and crackpot professors were an easy diversion from other seemingly insolvable problems.

Four important local factors shaped anticommunist initiatives in Massachusetts during the depression: the powerful conservatizing influence of the Catholic Church, century old rivalry between Yankee elites and Irish immigrants, militant struggles between capitalists and workers over diminished profits, and anti-Semitism. Patriotic societies such as the American Legion, Daughters of the American Revolution, and, on the far right, the Sentinels of the Republic stepped up local agitation as well. Anticommunist activity turned up in three venues: among police and other law enforcement agencies, in local and municipal government, and in the state legislature. The most prominent statewide initiatives were enactment of a

teachers' oath law in 1935 and the convening of a special commission in 1937 to investigate the activities of subversive organizations within the commonwealth.

## The Police

The first overt anticommunist initiatives during the depression came from police and municipal authorities in response to militant strikes and demonstrations protesting unemployment. While the Communist party had a hand in these radical activities, its members were certainly not the sole actors. Nevertheless, the presence of even a few communists gave police and municipal authorities a freer hand to suppress all radical organizing in the name of combatting subversive influences.

Industry in the state had been fleeing to the low-wage South since the end of World War I. Conditions of the early depression led thousands of working people in Massachusetts to protest their deteriorating economic situation. When they did, local authorities moved in quickly to break strikes. By raising the Red flag, police drove a wedge between striking workers and their leadership, winning community support for their actions. In 1928, 27,000 textile workers in New Bedford went on strike under the leadership of the left-led National Textile Workers Union. At the time, only one-third of the striking workers were union members. Police arrested hundreds of workers. Strike leaders were forced to hold meetings outdoors because police

closed down every suitable hall for building code violations. When the strike spread to neighboring Fall River, its chief of police arrested 200 picketers when they tried to hold a parade and outdoor demonstration.[5]

In February 1931, 10,000 textile workers in Lawrence struck to protest management's ten percent cut in wages while speeding up machinery. The National Textile Worker's Union, and its fiery communist organizer Edith Berkman, led this strike. Local and state law enforcement agencies quickly joined forces to stop the strike. The Lawrence police arrested the strike committee for conspiring to destroy property and intimidate employees. After their trial, federal prosecutors from Boston rearrested strike leaders and detained them on immigration charges. While strike leaders were in jail, Lawrence police officers raided the union's headquarters seizing all their records, typewriters, mimeograph machines and papers. The owner of the building gave the union notice that their lease was terminated, while the owner of a local hall hired for the union's mass meetings cancelled the contract.[6] These actions demonstrate how police pressured private citizens to help them destroy what they considered to be a subversive union. It also suggests that local business leaders backed the police crackdown as well.

By 1937, repression of communists in Lawrence was official policy. The Lawrence City Marshal told investigators for the Civil Liberties Union of Massachusetts

that city officials denied use of municipal facilities to speakers who were "too radical." According to the marshal, police prohibited leafleting for radical causes and picketing for political purposes, and denied parade permits to groups that advocated unpopular doctrines. Police also prevented labor organizers from entering the city freely. School authorities banned "liberal" student clubs.[7]

In 1933, Lowell shoe workers struck over wages, union protection and the closed shop. As the strike wore on, shop owners decided to reopen their businesses with strikebreakers. Local police escorted strikebreakers into shops past angry picketers. When physical confrontations broke out between strikers and strikebreakers, local newspapers blamed the violence solely on "Red" influence in the union.[8] The charge was preposterous since these shoe workers belonged to a conservative craft union affiliated with the AFL. Communism was a red herring that diverted attention away from deeper economic causes of the strike brought on by the depression.

The police in Boston repeatedly tangled with Communist-led protests on the Boston Common. They had no trouble enlisting support from James Michael Curley, Boston's Irish Catholic mayor. Curley hated communists and wanted to keep them out of Boston. He never hesitated to use the powers of his office to suppress advocates of doctrines that offended the sensibilities of his Catholic constituency. During his stints as mayor of Boston, Curley

tangled with the Ku Klux Klan, Margaret Sanger and the Communist party.[9] He was adamant in refusing to issue permits for Communist-sponsored rallies on the Boston Common. In May 1929, police arrested speakers representing the Communist party and Socialist party at a rally on Boston Common when they began to discuss Sacco and Vanzetti.[10] In 1931, Curley refused to issue a permit for a rally featuring Edith Berkman, the communist organizer of striking textile workers in Lawrence.[11] Police turned off the lights in the middle of evening rallies if they disapproved of the content of speeches.[12] Plain-clothed police officers patrolled Boston's parks looking for communists violating park regulations that prohibited the distribution of handbills.[13]

Mayor Curley and Police Commissioner Michael Crowley saw only communist agitators behind unemployment rallies and other mass demonstrations during the early depression. Their policy was to respond to these events with a great show of force. In March 1930, when 4,000 people gathered in Boston to protest unemployment, Curley ordered mounted policemen to ring the Common. When protestors headed up Beacon Hill to picket the heavily guarded state house, police charged the marchers, beating them back with nightsticks. Similar clashes took place at a May Day demonstration in 1930, and in August 1930 at a demonstration commemorating the third anniversary of the execution of Sacco and Vanzetti.[14] In October 1930, a specially organized "Flying Squadron" of crack shooters equipped with

tear gas bombs joined 200 police officers to stop unemployed workers from marching on the national convention of the American Federation of Labor held in Boston. On May Day, 1931, 300 police officers armed with tear gas, submachine guns and "old hickory nightsticks"--not used since the 1919 police strike--surrounded 5,000 people gathered to hear speakers on the Boston Common.[15] Mayor Curley read Boston well; he heard almost no opposition to his policy of massive state repression in response to communist organizing.

In 1933, Curley's Police Commissioner ordered officers to bring all arrested communists to headquarters for photographing and fingerprinting to build a "red file."[16] This marked the beginning of Boston's Red Squad. Commissioner Crowley had been working on this project since 1930 when he testified in Washington, D.C. before Representative Hamilton Fish's legislative committee investigating subversive propaganda. Crowley was part of a group from Massachusetts, including law enforcement officials and a professional red hunter, who testified at the Fish committee hearings. The lead-off witness from Massachusetts was Edward Hunter, a shadowy figure who headed the Industrial Defense Association established in 1926 to keep communists out of industry. Hunter was financed by wealthy industrialists, and once he prepared a Massachusetts blacklist for the local D.A.R. In the interchange between Fish and Hunter, it is very clear that both men were motivated by anti-Semitism in their hunt for communists.

Chairman Fish repeatedly interrupted Hunter to ask him if communists he was naming were Jewish.[17] Other witnesses from Massachusetts who testified at the Fish committee hearings included Michael Crowley, Superintendent of Police in Boston, along with his Chief of Detectives. They were both quite embarrassed when Fish asked if the Boston police had established a Red Squad and they had to answer no. By 1933, that machinery was in place.

Repression of strikers, union leaders and radicals was certainly not new in Massachusetts during the depression. The only new aspect of this form of antiradicalism was targeting the Communist party. In 1912 it was the IWW; twenty years later it was the Communist party and left-led unions. Throughout the depression, officials in industrial areas like Lawrence, New Bedford and Boston quietly went about doing what they had always done--kicking labor agitators out of town. The source of these initiatives were local manufacturers and business elite backed by local newspaper editors and middle-class immigrant leaders. David Goldberg, in his work on Lawrence, describes conservative Italians who launched an Americanism campaign in 1919 to discredit the left-led textile union, and to distance "loyal" Italian workers from labor leaders who "do not belong to our people."[18]

The events are catalogued here to show the continuity of anticommunism from the 1920s through the 1930s and to illustrate how the Communist party was blamed for sowing

discontent among working people. In 1930, Mayor Curley called for "the application of the same character of courage that made possible the firing of the shot heard around the world at Lexington to solve the problem of Communism we face today."[19] The problem, however, was capitalism, not communism. The stock market crash of 1929 and ensuing depression called into question capitalism's promise of future prosperity for anyone willing to compete. Some ordinary Americans, though few in number, began to consider communism as an alternative to capitalism. This is what frightened so many political and community leaders in Massachusetts.

## National Anticommunism

The principal anticommunist initiative in the early 1930s at the national level was Representative Hamilton Fish's investigation of communist propaganda. Although the Fish committee hearings and report did not produce any federal legislation to combat communism, the publicity thrust Fish into the limelight as he toured the country denouncing subversion. This caught the attention of political leaders in Massachusetts. In 1931, Mayor Curley invited Fish, who he described as a "prominent anticommunist," to be the principal speaker at Boston's "patriotic exercises" on May Day.[20] Fish told the crowd that communism was "alien" to America and was being brought in from the Soviet Union. He estimated that two-thirds of

all communists in the U.S. could not speak English, and warned the 5,000 spectators to be on guard against "invidious attacks against our economic system and even our form of government by Communists, Socialists, pink intellectuals, college professors and a smattering of ministers."[21]

Not since the end of World War I had there been such alarm over suspected communist subversion in education. In 1921, Vice-President Calvin Coolidge wrote a three-part article for a national women's magazine subtitled "Are the 'Reds' Stalking Our College Women?" Coolidge focused his outcry on the Intercollegiate Socialist Society, organized in 1905, and the radicalism it created among the women students.[22] The furor died down rather quickly, perhaps because it was "only women" who were at risk of becoming Bolsheviks. Higher education for women was still seen as a novelty in the early 1920s and was not taken very seriously by men with power. A decade later, Hamilton Fish charged that communists were boring from within institutions that trained the next generation of elite men, such as Harvard and the University of Chicago. This charge was taken very seriously by anticommunists in Massachusetts.

Fish's report did more than just grab headlines. It broadened the scope of the Red Menace in America. In the past, radicals were seen as violence prone, dangerous, foreign labor agitators. The solution was arrest and deportation. What Fish did was to Americanize the Red

Menace. An alert citizenry had to watch out for American born teachers as well as immigrant labor leaders. Fish also added a strong dose of anti-Semitism to national anticommunist rhetoric. By targeting the New York City public school system, he painted an alarming picture of Bolshevik Jews tainting gullible American youth.

Other national forces also focused attention on the threat of communist subversion in schools. In 1934, the Hearst newspaper chain launched a crusade against "Red" college professors based on the Fish committee report. In Massachusetts, the *Boston American* printed these sensational articles. At the same time, national patriotic groups such as the American Legion and Daughters of the American Revolution increased their lobbying for anti-subversive legislation. These groups were more active and more united in their national anticommunist propaganda programs in 1934-35 than they had been for many years.[23] In 1934, the American Legion launched a national campaign to win passage of state legislation requiring loyalty oaths for teachers. John Walsh, chairman of the Legion's national legislative committee, was also vice commander of the Massachusetts department and chairman of its legislative committee. He organized the fight for passage of a teachers' oath in the state legislature, a topic discussed in more detail below.[24]

Professional red hunters, such as James True Associates headquartered in Washington, D.C., also stepped up their campaign against "Red corruption of schools and colleges."

Harvard law professor Zechariah Chafee sent Harvard President James Conant an excerpt from True's weekly *Industrial Control Reports* with a note saying "it throws helpful light upon some of the forces behind the various states requiring teachers' oaths." Anti-Semitism was the dominant theme of this arch conservative publication that railed against the "Roosevelt-Frankfurter new deal," *Washington Post* publisher Eugene Mayer, international Jewish bankers, and Eleanor Roosevelt. True reported that "results now establish the fact that a campaign, started about 18 years ago, has been waged to indoctrinate with socialism and communism the teaching of all American schools and colleges... As a result, Harvard, once a leading university, has graduated more communists than any college in the world."[25]

With national organizations focused on the threat of communist subversion in education, it is no coincidence that nearly half the nation's state legislatures--including Massachusetts--considered teachers' oath bills in their 1934 and 1935 legislative sessions amidst these national anticommunist campaigns.[26] Once the issue was brought to the state level, however, it was debated in purely local terms.

## Catholic Anticommunism

Among Irish Democrats in the Massachusetts legislature, the most vocal supporters of a teachers' oath, these

national anticommunist initiatives echoed the warnings of their church. There were two threads to the anticommunist argument articulated by the Church hierarchy and by Catholic intellectuals in Massachusetts during the depression. According to one thread, communism threatened the very existence of the Church. Within civil society, the Church's domain was morality. However, since scientific materialism had no moral component, there was no need for a God or a church within a communist state. Cardinal O'Connell, the conservative Prelate of the Boston Archdiocese, defined communism as a "new Paganism" that "insofar as it denies the existence of God and proposes the abolition of all religion, is a heresy with which no Catholic can compromise while remaining a member of the Church."[27] From this perspective, communism was a rival religion that must be destroyed before it destroyed Christianity. John St. John, a Jesuit professor at Weston College, told listeners of the Catholic Truth Hour that "most religions have cherished the conviction of a world invasion; and Communism is no exception...We Catholics are the main object of the attack; it is our Faith and our Church which it is desired at all costs to destroy."[28]

Such prophecies did not seem exaggerated in the context of Catholic persecution in Mexico by the Cardinas regime, events that were well known to Catholics in Massachusetts. The newspaper and voice of the Boston Archdiocese, *The Pilot*, carried weekly horror stories of Mexican priests

being arrested or murdered and Catholic schools and churches being closed down. Later, in 1936 and 1937, the stories of Catholic persecution in Spain filled the pages of *The Pilot*.

The other thread of the anticommunist argument articulated by the Church hierarchy and Catholic intellectuals was that communism threatened to destroy democracy from within. Father Corrigan, a Jesuit professor at Boston College, warned the freshman class that "the nuclei of Communism have been planted in the ranks of labor, in the schools and colleges."[29] In early 1935, a listener of the Catholic Truth Hour asked why so many of their programs focused on communism when there seemed to be so little danger of it in New England. Rev. Ahern, a Jesuit professor speaking for the Diocese, responded that few people were aware of the enormous communist propaganda machinery that "attacks the very foundation of American Democracy." "How," he asked, "can any red-blooded American remain silent, especially if he has the opportunity to arouse his fellow citizens to a sense of an impending danger?"[30] According to this argument, communism threatened the existence of the Church since it was democratic institutions and values that sustained the Church in the United States. Cardinal O'Connell explained to his flock that "Communism is an enemy of the Democracy in which the Catholic Church has lived, prospered and developed."[31]

When the two threads of the anticommunist argument were intertwined, Catholics became the new American patriots,

protecting the Republic from evil outside forces. In Massachusetts, descendants of Irish immigrants championed the values of Yankee forefathers while descendants of Revolutionary patriots peddled foreign, disloyal doctrines. This was repeated at all levels of the Church as well as by Catholic laymen. Cardinal O'Connell urged Catholics to "let your sense of fundamental justice and your sound Americanism be an impregnable bulwark" against the spread of communist ideas.[32] P.J. Moynihan, the State Secretary of the Knights of Columbus, warned a western Massachusetts audience that "too many native born Americans take their privileges for granted." "The United States," he explained, "was founded on Catholic principles. Thomas Jefferson received his inspiration for the Declaration of Independence from Catholic writings."[33] Governor Hurley told the Holy Name Society: "It may yet be our destiny to save the America we love... [from] modern liberalism that embraces red Russia, red Spain and red Mexico."[34] The Massachusetts delegation to the Knights of Columbus annual convention in 1936 praised the work of the organization in spreading "Catholicism and Americanism" throughout the nation.[35]

Another source of Catholic anticommunism during the depression was Father Coughlin, the populist radio priest from Detroit. Boston was one of the strongest Coughlinite cities in the United States much to the dismay of Cardinal O'Connell considered Coughlin a demagogue and forbade his priests from listening to Coughlin's radio show. Coughlin's

first sermons were broadcast from Detroit in 1926. By the time the stock market crashed, he already enjoyed a national audience. Coughlin focused on the peril of domestic communism as the major theme of his 1929-30 broadcast season. From his radio pulpit, he preached that Catholics must choose between Christ and the "Red Fog." By the mid-1930s, Coughlin was railing against bank reform and currency reform. His analysis of these issues was quite muddled and quickly degenerated into overt anti-Semitism. Coughlin's villains were bankers and wealthy industrialists who he portrayed as haughty, cold-blooded schemers. This characterization fit Irish Boston's view of their own tormentors--puritanical Protestants.[36]

Coughlin visited Massachusetts several times. During a vacation to the Berkshires in the summer of 1935, he drove to Boston to visit his "old friend," Governor Curley. Word flew threw both chambers of the legislature that Coughlin was in the building. He entered the floor of the House to "thunderous applause." Leverett Saltonstall, an influential Yankee politician and Speaker of the House, introduced Coughlin. Allowing as how he did not agree with all of Coughlin's views, he nevertheless greeted Coughlin warmly saying that "the House is greatly honored in having you address them." Coughlin talked very briefly about "dangers threatening the world today, Nazism, Communism and that other form of dictatorship which is now insinuating itself into State and Federal government"--the last being New Deal

"pinks" in government. He urged the legislature "to do your utmost to keep intact the democratic form of government and to see that nothing subversive undermines it." With that he left the chamber to a standing ovation and went to the Senate which gave him a similar reception. During this trip to Massachusetts, Coughlin reported that Boston had the second highest per capita membership in his organization, the National Union for Social Justice.[37]

In 1936, Father Coughlin joined forces with Dr. Townsend of California and formed the Union Party which ran a slate of candidates in national and state elections. The vice-presidential nominee on the Union Party ticket was Thomas C. O'Brien, a middle class Irish Catholic lawyer from Boston. Some Massachusetts politicians running for re-election to the House of Representatives in 1936 abandoned Roosevelt and the Democratic party at the top of the ticket in order to win Father Coughlin's endorsement.[38] Although Roosevelt swept the state in 1936, the Union Party presidential candidate did better than any other third party candidate since the Civil War. Curley blamed his defeat to Henry Cabot Lodge, Jr. in the senatorial race on the presence of a Union Party candidate on the ballot.[39]

Whatever else it may have been, Catholic anticommunism was never monolithic. The hierarchy of the Church and supporters of Father Coughlin had very different agendas when attacking communism. Coughlin based his appeal based primarily on class, and workers were particularly receptive

to his message. Among Church officials, by contrast, there was great disagreement over what was communistic. Cardinal O'Connell never supported programs initiated by the moderate wing of the church, led by Monsignor Ryan in Washington, D.C. For O'Connell, even these programs were too radical. When we listen to Catholic laymen articulate their reasons for combatting communism, what comes across is fear for the survival of their church, the most important institution in their daily lives.

## Teachers' Oath

For several reasons, then, Catholic legislators took up the banner of anticommunism by advocating passage of a teachers' oath law in 1935. The bill required all teachers in public and private schools and universities to take the following oath:

> I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and that I will faithfully discharge the duties of the position of _____ according to the best of my abilities.

Technically, this is not a "loyalty" oath because the affiant does not swear loyalty to the government. However, proponents of the bill clearly saw it as a loyalty oath and as a means to root out subversive teachers. The legislature debated the bill as if it were a loyalty oath. What made the bill so extreme was that it covered teachers in private schools, colleges and universities as well as public

institutions. Other states had not gone this far, prompting the American Civil Liberties Union to denounce the Massachusetts law as "more sweeping than any law yet passed in 18 states with such legislation."[40]

In early June, 1935, when the teachers' oath bill reached the floor of the House, Tommy Dorgan, an Irish Democrat from Dorchester, called on every "loyal American" to support the bill. "The time to stop Soviet propaganda is now," he urged, "not when the horse gets out of the stable. Keep America for Americans." As he was speaking, Representative Casey, a fellow Irish Democrat from Boston, scuffled with guards at the door as he tried to enter the chamber carrying a large American flag to present to Dorgan. Liberal Yankee Republicans opposed the teachers' oath. During debate, Christian Herter, the representative for Yankee wards in Boston's Back Bay, spoke against the bill, calling it "class legislation." Republican Walton Tuttle from suburban Framingham told his colleagues that "Public Enemy Number One is ignorance parading in the guise of legislation such as this."[41]

Opponents of the teachers' oath were caught by surprise when the bill was introduced in the legislature at the request of the American Legion. Senator Henry Parkman, Jr., the blue-blooded Republican chairman of the Education Committee, warned Harvard law professor Zechariah Chafee in February, 1935 that "in the present temper of the Legislature it is likely to be passed."[42] The American

Legion came to the hearing on the bill well prepared, and presented a strong case. This prompted fifteen college presidents to petition the Education Committee for an opportunity to respond. President Daniel Marsh of Boston University acted as spokesman for the college presidents at the rehearing. Opponents of the bill were quick to display their anticommunist credentials. They argued that while they opposed communism, the bill was unacceptable because it singled out teachers and cast dispersion on their loyalty. When Robert J. Watt, legislative agent for the Massachusetts Federation of Labor, testified, he told the committee that "while those who wave the flag do the talking, the American Federation of Labor has done more to keep down Communism in this country than any other force."[43]

The American Legion and its allies set the terms of debate which oath opponents were never able to overcome. Legionnaires succeeded in establishing the principle that opposition to the oath was an act of disloyalty. Different strategies to get around this labelling were unsuccessful. When the bill reached the Senate floor for its third and final reading, Republican Senator Henry Parkman, Jr. demanded a roll call, urging his colleagues to "recover your sanity. We are going back to the Dark Ages in this sort of legislation trying by this method to inspire loyalty." Democratic Senator Charles Miles, chairman of the Education Committee, told Parkman his remarks were an insult to the Senate. The bill passed 27 to 3.[44] Parkman's roll call

strategy backfired; when forced to take a public position, few senators opposed the oath.

In the House, oath opponents took a different tack and tried to defeat the bill without requiring legislators to take a public stand. The bill was defeated on a standing vote, 68 to 61 with many legislators not voting. Representative Dorgan, however, demanded a roll call. Oath opponents then tried to kill the bill by proposing an amendment postponing implementation of the law for forty years. When Dorgan "protested violently," the roll was called and the amendment was defeated.[45]

The bill passed the House, 130 to 94, and it was signed into law by a jubilant Democratic Governor, James Michael Curley. While the teachers' oath bill was being debated in the legislature, Curley had used all the powers of his office to win passage of the bill. The American Legion praised his contribution claiming his "whole-hearted, enthusiastic" support of the bill was "so energetic as to even discourage many sources of opposition."[46] One of Curley's powerful opponents was his Commissioner of Education, Dr. Payson Smith. Smith had been Commissioner since 1917 and was widely respected throughout the state by public school teachers and principals as well as by the notables at Harvard's School of Education. Smith did not support the teachers' oath bill or Curley's efforts to beef up the Education Department's Division of Americanization. The Division's main work was to give advice and clerical

assistance to immigrants filling out forms for naturalization. Governor Curley wanted to use the Division to "combat the spread of communism" by questioning applicants about their political beliefs.[47]

When Smith's term expired in December, 1935, six months after the teachers' oath was enacted, Curley retaliated against Smith and his liberal Yankee supporters by appointing James Reardon as Commissioner. At the time, Reardon was a little known school superintendent from Adams, a small town in western Massachusetts. His main qualifications seemed to be that he was Irish and that he supported the teachers' oath. The night before he was sworn in as Commissioner, Reardon told the press "I am 100 percent in favor of the Oath bill. I do not believe that Communism and Socialism should be spread among our school children, and the teachers who spread this type of propaganda should be driven from our schools."[48]

The following year, 1936, those opposed to the teachers' oath law formed the Massachusetts Society for Freedom in Teaching to organize a stronger effort to win repeal of the law. Samuel Eliot Morison, a prominent Yankee historian at Harvard, served as chairman of the committee. The Society recruited a formidable army of educators, labor leaders, and Protestant ministers to square off against the American Legion. Twelve hundred spectators crowded into Gardner Auditorium to root for their side when the

legislature's education committee held hearings on repeal of the law.

The entire Yankee educational establishment in Massachusetts that had for so many years excluded Irish students turned out to support the repeal bill. For these educators, the issue was academic freedom, not communist subversion. President Conant of Harvard led a delegation that included the presidents of Radcliffe, Williams, Amherst, Smith, Mount Holyoke, Tufts, MIT, Wheaton, and Simmons as well as the headmasters of Milton Academy, Phillips Academy, Winsor Academy, Williston Academy, Browne and Nichols School, and the Fenn School.

Public school teachers were represented by Hugh Nixon, president of the Massachusetts Teachers Federation, an organization affiliated with the National Educational Association. Nixon's organization represented 21,000 elementary and secondary school teachers, approximately 80 percent of all teachers in the state. He told the committee that "teachers resent this nation-wide drive to make them jump through a hoop at the behest of an organized minority who are using the whip of suspicion and misrepresentation."[49] Other organizations of educators opposed to the oath included the Massachusetts Elementary Principals Association, Massachusetts Junior High School Principals Association, Massachusetts High School Principals Association and Massachusetts School Superintendents Association.[50]

The only Massachusetts educators absent from the hearings were those affiliated with Catholic schools. In 1935, Boston college president Gallagher joined his colleagues to testify against the teachers' oath. A year later, however, the presidents of Boston College and Holy Cross declined to join the delegation of college presidents. The president of Holy Cross explained that it was not "an appropriate time to raise the issue again."[51] One detects the hand of Cardinal O'Connell in this abrupt reversal of position.

Labor presented a united front in opposition to the teachers' oath. The AFL, the Central Labor Union of Boston and every other industrial center in the state, all American Federation of Teachers locals in the state, as well as locals of many other unions sent representatives or messages to the hearings.[52] Michael Flaherty, president of the Massachusetts Federation of Labor, an AFL affiliate, told the committee that "such a bill is not good Americanism."[53]

John Walsh, state commander of the American Legion and Waltham school committee member, led the fight to keep the oath. Witnesses on this side of the issue included American Legion officials and representatives from other patriotic organizations. Legionnaire Royal Hayes, formerly a special investigator of communism in New York's public schools, testified as an "expert" on subversion. Oath supporters also called Howard A. Chase, a recent convert from the "Red Army of Massachusetts," to testify about communist

indoctrination in Massachusetts classrooms. In the course of his testimony, Chase red-baited James Sheldon, floor manager for opponents of the oath, accusing him being a communist. However, Chase discredited himself when he admitted that he had testified the year before in favor of the oath under an assumed name.[54]

The only educator called to testify for the oath was Dr. Frederick Gillis, Assistant Superintendent of Schools in Boston. He told the committee that teachers "are not flattered in the least by being associated with the ideas of absolute academic freedom and intellectualism given off by these infallible professors and college executives."[55] Gillis was one of several witnesses to articulate such anti-intellectual feelings. Representative Dorgan told the committee it was their job to "protect the children for their parents against the dangerous minority of professors." "What is an American?" he asked. "Certainly it's not a professor. The man in the street is a better American than some of the professors."[56]

Irish Democrats on the Education Committee deeply resented being lectured to by "crackpot professors." They bristled before the luminaries from higher education. Tommy Dillon, an Irish Democrat from Cambridge, told his colleagues in the House that the professors "treated the members of the committee as if they were so much dirt; and deep down in their hearts they really think we are that much dirt." Representative Dorgan, who liked to be called the

father of the teachers' oath, reported that educators wanted to change "we, the people, to we, the professors." Senator Miles, a Democrat from Brockton, thought that Professor James McLaughlin of Harvard Law School was "insulting and ridiculing" the committee when he accused them of "danc[ing] to the tunes of their masters, Mr. Hearst and the American Legion."[57]

The House defeated the repeal bill 88 to 133, a similar vote to the one the year before when the law was enacted. Later that year, in November 1936, Republicans were swept into local office throughout the state, even though Franklin Roosevelt easily carried the state in the presidential contest. The following year, 1937, a more strongly Republican legislature mustered enough votes to pass a bill repealing the teachers' oath by a vote of 129-112. Irish Democratic governor, Charles F. Hurley, promptly vetoed the bill finding it a barrier "against the subversive influences of our day." He labelled opponents of the oath as "vicious minorities" bent on destroying "the principles upon which this Republic was founded." In 1938, a repeal bill failed to pass the Senate and in 1939, it was voted down in the House 102-105. The teachers' oath remained law in Massachusetts until 1986.

The battle over the teachers' oath in Massachusetts demonstrates well the difficulty of trying to deconstruct the political culture of anticommunism because anticommunist currents of thought were carried over the airwaves, in

newspapers, in taverns, from pulpits, and among acquaintances. One approach is to look at the players on both sides. Among Bay State legislators, Catholics were the most vocal proponents of the teachers' oath. Anticommunism hit a nerve among them, but not among Yankees, for specific reasons. One reason was that they felt deeply threatened by communism. They believed that a communist state would destroy their church and the democratic institutions that allowed their church to thrive just as Catholics currently were being persecuted in Mexico and Spain.

Most Yankee Protestants had no reason to feel the same threat. There were exceptions, of course. Alexander Lincoln, a prominent Yankee lawyer who was treasurer of the Constitutional Liberty League of Massachusetts and president of the Sentinels of the Republic, two arch-conservative organizations, was one such example.[58] Anticommunist Protestant elite, such as Lincoln and Hamilton Fish were isolationists and saw the communist movement as the primary force behind internationalism. Most of the Yankee elite, however, understood that economic, social and state power was firmly within their control and that their institutions could "tolerate" a few extremists, especially when they were their own kind, such as Dr. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow Dana, a well-known communist sympathizer at Harvard. The only institution Irish Catholics controlled was their church, whose existence was threatened by communist ideology.

Another Irish nerve that anticommunism touched was the century long ethnic rivalry between Irish immigrants and Yankees. This rivalry was fueled by class conflict as much as by different religious practices and customs. Although Irish influence in Massachusetts politics was clearly established by the 1930s, the Irish had made little headway in business or social affairs of the state. This was very clear in the parallel educational systems in Massachusetts--private schools for the Protestant elite, parochial schools for the Catholic middle class, and public schools for everyone else. The loyalty oath legislation penetrated one exclusive Yankee domain--private education--even though individual Catholics were unable to do so. Nowhere was this clearer than in Cambridge, home to Harvard University, the symbol of Yankee domination and exclusion. Six Irish Democrats and one Republican represented Cambridge in the state legislature. All of them voted in favor of the teachers' oath while Harvard's educational elite led the opposition.

The teachers' oath debate was also colored by the cultural gulf between Catholic authoritarianism and Protestant individualism. The act of declaring one's loyalty to a superior was very familiar to Catholics. As Monsignor Peter Guilday, secretary of the American Catholic History Association, explained to Samuel Eliot Morison: "It is so difficult to know what to say about the new Test Oath. *We are so used to them.*" Guilday pointed to his own

colleagues at Catholic University who took an annual "oath against modernity." Catholic clerics, Guilday explained, must take an oath of loyalty at every rung up the ecclesiastic ladder.[59] Catholic laymen in Massachusetts took every opportunity to reaffirm their loyalty to Cardinal O'Connell. At the Massachusetts Knights of Columbus annual meeting in 1930, the membership adopted a resolution extending their "deep sense of fealty and gratitude and constant loyalty to His Eminence, Cardinal O'Connell."[60] When John Swift, a state Supreme Court judge and president of the Massachusetts State Council of the Knights of Columbus wrote to Cardinal O'Connell, he signed his letters "With renewed assurance, Your Eminence, of our constant loyalty."[61] Cardinal O'Connell's message to the annual Knights of Columbus Patriots' Day Banquet is 1931 concluded that "obedience to the State is loyalty to God, and patriotism is blessed by religion."[62] Such professions of loyalty were unheard of among elite Protestant religions and were totally incompatible with Yankee individualism. Thus, what was natural to Catholics, was anathema to Episcopalians and Unitarians.

It is wrong to conclude, however, that Irish Catholic Democrats were the only politicians who supported the oath. There were blue-blooded Republicans, like Henry Cabot Lodge, Jr., and Yankee Democrats, like former Governor Joseph Ely, who supported the oath as well. Jewish legislators, both Democrats and Republicans, supported the oath.[63] In

general, Democrats supported the oath and Republicans opposed it although there were many defections on each side. The Democrats were consistent, at least, with approximately 80 percent favoring the oath and 20 percent opposing the oath each time it came to a roll call vote. Among Catholic Democrats (Irish, Italian, French Canadian and Portuguese), 91 percent supported the teachers' oath.[64]

Republicans were the ones who hesitated on the teachers' oath. In 1935, when the oath was first introduced, 37 percent of the Republican legislators were in favor and 63 percent opposed; in 1937, only 23 percent of the Republicans favored the oath while 77 percent opposed it; in 1939, 30 percent favored the oath, while 70 percent were opposed. Republicans who favored the oath came from the two extreme wings of the party--arch conservative Yankees and "liberal" Catholic Republicans sympathetic to working class issues. One way to illustrate this voting pattern is to compare the CIO and AFL ratings of legislators supporting and opposing the oath. These ratings were based on the number of times legislators voted for a position endorsed by the AFL or the CIO. A rating of 100 means the legislator voted in favor of every bill endorsed by the AFL or the CIO; a rating of zero means that the legislator opposed every bill endorsed by the AFL or the CIO. In 1940, Republicans as a whole received a 34 percent rating from the CIO and a 33 percent rating from the AFL, while Democrats as a whole received a 70 percent rating from the CIO and 73

percent rating from the AFL. The arch conservative Yankees who voted for the teachers' oath were rated well below the Republican average: 18 percent from the CIO and 13 percent from the AFL. The "liberal" Republicans who voted for the oath looked more like Democrats than Republicans in their ratings from organized labor: 61 percent from the CIO and 64 percent from the AFL.[65]

What these numbers illustrate is that a coalition of Catholic Democrats, Republicans with working class sympathies, and conservative Yankee Republicans supported the teachers' oath in Massachusetts. To these legislators and their constituents, communism threatened their way of life. Catholics feared for their church; Yankees feared for their fortunes. Of all the anticommunist initiatives in the depression, the teachers' oath was the most contested. The battle over "crackpot professors" created strange bedfellows, like Mayor Curley and Hamilton Fish. This is because anticommunism, like its counterpart Americanism, was multidimensional. Different people ascribed quite different meanings to the same words.[66] What all agreed on was that communists and the Communist party were easy targets in very troubling times. Despite all the rhetoric, however, as a tool to combat communism in the commonwealth, the teachers' oath accomplished very little.

## Special Commission to Investigate Communistic, Fascist, Nazi and Other Subversive Groups, 1937

The other anticommunist initiative in the Massachusetts legislature during the depression was the empaneling of a special commission to investigate "Communistic, Fascist, Nazi and Other Subversive Groups" in the commonwealth. Representative Philip Sherman of Somerville filed the bill creating the commission in December 1936. Sherman was a 38 year old Jewish Republican lawyer who had represented his suburban Boston district since 1931. According to a reporter covering the hearings for the *New Republic*, Sherman promoted the commission to "prove that there are no Jews in the C.P."[67] If this really was true, how Sherman intended to accomplish this goal is a mystery since there were a number of Jews in the leadership of the Communist party in New England. The General Secretary for District One, which included Massachusetts, was Philip Frankfeld, a man whose family were Jewish immigrants and who had moved to Boston from New York City. Perhaps the reporter meant that Sherman wanted to prove not all Jews were communists. With anti-Semitism on the rise throughout the 1920s and 1930s, middle class Jews were very concerned about adding the stigma of communism to the ammunition of their antagonists. In 1924, the Ku Klux Klan held a rally in Worcester that was attended by 15,000 people. The principal Klan spokesman was King Kleagle Eugene Farnsworth of Maine whose rhetoric was anti-

Semitic and anti-Catholic. That year, crosses were burned in dozens of communities through the commonwealth.[68]

Anti-Semitism in Massachusetts ran much deeper than the Ku Klux Klan. Such prominent Yankee Brahmins as Senator Henry Cabot Lodge and Harvard president A. Lawrence Lowell, were well known anti-Semites. Lodge championed federal legislation in the 1920s to restrict immigration in order to stop the exodus of Jews from Russia to the United States. Lowell testified against the nomination of Louis Brandeis to the United States Supreme Court. Alexander Lincoln, a prominent Boston attorney and president of the Sentinels of the Republic, was branded a virulent anti-Semite in the summer of 1936 when the Black Committee in Washington seized a letter in which Lincoln stated that "the Jewish threat is a real one." James Michael Curley, who was out of office at the time and running against Lodge for a Senate seat, seized on the charge milking it for he could. Although the record is somewhat murky on the charge of Lincoln's anti-Semitism, the perception that Yankee elites were anti-Semitic was not.[69] It was well known that elite Yankee universities had a quota for the number of Jewish students they would accept each year.[70] The few Jewish men who were accepted at Harvard Law School were not hired by the Yankee law firms even though they achieved such distinctions as editor of the *Law Review*. It was in this climate of anti-Semitism that Philip Sherman proposed to investigate Reds in Massachusetts.

The bill establishing the special commission sailed through the House and Senate and was signed by Governor Hurley in May 1937. This was the same legislative session when the House and Senate were embroiled in combative hearings and debate over repeal of the teachers' oath. A month before the special commission bill was enacted, the repeal bill had passed the House and Senate by a very narrow margin, only to be vetoed by Governor Hurley. When the special commission bill came up for a vote a month later, only half of the representatives were present to vote as had been present on the repeal bill vote. Clearly, the forces seeking repeal of the teachers' oath law--both in the legislature and in the community--did not put the special commission in the same category as the oath. While the teachers' oath was considered to be a threat to civil liberties, the special commission was not. The major difference between the two bills was their target. The teachers' oath applied to all teachers in the state, including influential Yankee educators. The special commission targeted Reds and "other subversives." Only a minority of people opposing the teachers' oath believed the First Amendment applied to communists. Everyone else--conservatives, moderates and liberals alike--dismissed this argument as communist propaganda.

The chairman of the commission was Senator Sybil Holmes, a conservative Republican lawyer from Brookline who had been an assistant district attorney for Middlesex County

in the 1920s.[71] As a newly elected Senator and the first woman to sit in that body, she appears to be an unlikely candidate for the position. However, she was a relative of Senate President Samuel Holmes Wragg, the person who appointed the three Senators to the commission, and perhaps he thought he could control Miss Holmes better than a more experienced male colleague.[72] The appointment of a junior Senator does indicate that it was not a highly prized position. Another senator was Thomas Burke, an Irish Catholic Democrat from Boston who had been an active proponent of the teachers' oath.

Commissioners appointed by the Republican speaker of the house represented the spectrum of immigrant groups in the commonwealth. He appointed three Republicans, Philip Sherman, the original sponsor of the Resolve establishing the commission, Edward Sirois, a French-Canadian from Lawrence and Anthony Julian, an Italian from Watertown, and two Democrats, Michael O'Brien, an Irishman from Easthampton and Jackson Holtz, a Jew from Boston.[73] Governor Hurley made three appointments including James Rose, former commander of the Massachusetts Department of the American Legion, and Leo Halloran, an Irishman from Quincy and also a former commander of the Massachusetts Department of the American Legion. The secretary to the commission was Roland Parker, nephew of Herbert Parker, the patriarchal, arch conservative Yankee lawyer who at the age of 87 was still active in the Sentinels of the Republic. All in all, this

was a very conservative commission whose members had several axes to grind.

In the beginning, the left in Massachusetts cooperated with the commission, on the theory that it would investigate the right as well as the left. Exposure of fascist tendencies in the commonwealth fit right into popular front strategy. When hearings began in September 1937, two leadoff witnesses were Philip Frankfeld, head of the Communist party in Massachusetts, and Earl Browder, head of the Communist party of the United States. Both men appeared voluntarily. They testified that the Communist party was not a subversive organization and outlined a fairly tame version of party history. Following popular front strategy, Browder told the commission the party's program was "educational, to win the majority to our concepts of socialism. We do not believe in the use of force against the will of the majority."[74] The commissioners had a quite different agenda for these hearings. Chairman Sybil Holmes demanded lists of all Party members and contributors. Senator Burke wanted to know if Frankfeld believed in God. James Rose asked Frankfeld if he would bear arms for the United States against the Soviet Union. After these initial combative sessions, the Communist party and its liberal allies began criticizing the scope of the investigation and called for a more extensive investigation of fascism in Massachusetts.

The commission held hearings throughout the fall 1937. It met 59 times in public hearings and 40 times in closed, executive session, hearing 70 witnesses and collecting over 1,000 exhibits. In May 1938, it issued a 580 page final report.[75] Only 29 pages dealt with fascism and Nazism; the other 551 dealt with the Communist party. The report reveals that the commission had access to undercover information about the internal workings of the party. It details meetings, resolutions, and internal instructions from the Central Committee of the CPUSA to District One; it names hundreds of people as Communist party functionaries or "fellow travellers" in Massachusetts; it lists aliases of the leadership; and it exposes recruiting strategies and organizing techniques.[76]

There were at least two sources of this information. One was the Bureau of Intelligence of the Massachusetts National Guard. In June 1937, a week after their first executive meeting, the commissioners met for several hours with General Cole and Colonel Dalton of the National Guard. As a result of this meeting, the National Guard agreed to give the commission the results of their ten-year secret investigation of communists in Massachusetts.[77] The National Guard had long been involved in anti-radical activities. In 1912, it was summoned to Lawrence to patrol the streets and protect strikebreakers during the great textile workers' strike. In 1919, the Guard was called out to police Boston when the city's patrolmen were locked out

over the issue of union recognition. In the 1920s and 1930s, the Guard's public role was limited to more traditional emergencies like the 1936 flood disaster and the 1938 hurricane.[78] It appears from the commission's report, however, that during this time the Guard was very active clandestinely.

The other source of undercover information was local police. The commission asked all chiefs of police in the state to share their files on communist activity within their jurisdiction. Although there is no extant record of compliance by local authorities, the findings of the report suggest that cooperation was extensive.[79] For instance, the final report contains brief sketches of 77 individuals from the Springfield area who are "known" communists and "supporters" of the Communist party. One man, John Daja, was reported to be "a paid agitator of the Communist party during labor troubles in western Massachusetts." Another was Oliver Larkin, a Smith College professor included because he belonged to the Massachusetts Committee to Aid Spanish Democracy and the American League Against War and Fascism. Mrs. Frank Mauri made the list because she was "alleged to be the distributor of Communist propaganda in Greenfield."[80] It is very likely that this information came from a clandestine Red Squad within the Springfield police.

The commission's report was criticized widely for being one-sided even as 2,000 copies were quickly snatched up. As well as issuing a report, the commission also recommended

passage of twelve bills to deal with the communist threat in the state. These bills ranged from election reforms to make it impossible for the Communist party to run candidates to establishment of a Division of Citizenship that would collect ongoing information about radical activities in the state. This Division would have continued the investigation made by the special commission, in essence institutionalizing the Red hunt in Massachusetts. None of these bills passed. Most died in committee or were referred to the next session of the legislature. Apparently the extreme position of the special commission was not a majority view in the Massachusetts legislature.

An indication of the commission's extremism was its inability to get adequate funding from the executive and legislative branches of government. In the fall of 1937, when several witnesses refused to turn over membership lists, the commission sued them in civil court to force compliance. The lawsuit prolonged the commission's work and legal fees drained its funds. When Chairman Holmes sought additional funds from Governor Hurley, he refused to transfer money from any other appropriation.[81] Since the legislature was not in session to authorize additional appropriations, the commission was forced to make do with the funds it had. In spring 1938, when the legislature was back in session, the House refused Chairman Holmes' request to authorize additional funds so that the commission could complete its investigation.[82]

Another indication of the commission's unpopularity was the fact that none of its members was able to capitalize politically on their role in exposing "subversive" activities. In 1938, Chairman Holmes was defeated in her bid for reelection to the Senate making her a one-term senator. Although Leo Halloran, former American Legion official and fellow member of the special commission, charged that she was defeated because of her "work against subversives," this was not true.[83] In 1936, Holmes narrowly defeated Edward Mullowney, a young, popular, Harvard educated attorney. Two years later, the slim margin of victory went in favor of Mullowney, not Holmes. She lost the election in the Republican stronghold of Brookline where Mullowney picked up his votes. A prominent political commentator for the local Brookline newspaper blamed her defeat on lack of support from "important politicians" and "influential Republicans" who backed Miss Holmes in 1936 but failed to support her reelection in 1938.[84] What this suggests is that some of her Republican constituency switched sides and her political mentors sat out her reelection. It does not make sense that liberal Republicans would abandon an anticommunist Republican for an anticommunist Democrat solely on the issue of communism. What makes more sense is that her constituents were more drawn to a bright, young male graduate of Harvard Law School than they were to a doughty, conservative self-taught female lawyer.

Of all the anticommunist initiatives during the depression, the special commission had the potential to do the most damage to communist organizing in the commonwealth. Yet, surprisingly, this initiative had the least popular support. The resolve establishing the commission slipped through the legislature virtually unnoticed while attention focused on the battle to repeal the teachers' oath law. In contrast to the teachers' oath, the commission had few boosters and few opponents. Its hearings were noisy and well publicized but its report, detailing virtually all communist activity in the commonwealth, went unheeded. The legislature as a whole seemed uninterested in the findings. Both the Governor and the legislature refused to allocate any additional funds to the committee. None of the legislation recommended by the commission ever made it out of committee, suggesting that the Republican leadership did not back the commission's report.

The special commission was not a grassroots initiative led by local citizens groups, but rather a project launched by disgruntled conservatives. The principal source of information for the special commission was the Bureau of Intelligence of the National Guard and local red squads. Law enforcement's agenda was to publicize information about the Communist party in Massachusetts, naming as many names as possible. Their targets were communists and communist sympathizers who had broken no laws and were outside the reach of traditional police repression. The legislature as

a whole, however, did not share this agenda during the depression nor were they being pressured by their constituents to investigate communism in the commonwealth.

## Catholic Lay Groups

Although the commission failed to get any of its proposed legislation passed, it did generate a lot of publicity about the potential threat of communism in the state, and it did publish hundred of names of people it labeled as communists and communist sympathizers. This exposure made it extremely difficult for popular front activities in Massachusetts to continue in 1937 and 1938.

Catholic lay groups led the battle against communism at the local level. The source of these anticommunist initiatives lay at the highest levels of the Catholic hierarchy. In 1934, the Pope's Secretary of State designated the Knights of Columbus as "the standard bearers of Catholic action."[85] Seeking to fulfill this mandate, the national office of the Order launched a campaign to pressure President Roosevelt to intercede in Mexico on behalf of persecuted Catholics. Although the campaign was unsuccessful, it served to heighten the issue of anticommunism among Catholic men in the United States. In May 1937, the Pope issued an Encyclical "On Atheistic Communism" spurring the Knights on to find new targets.

That fall, the Knights of Columbus in Massachusetts announced a campaign to combat communism uncovered during

the special commission's hearings. The thrust of the campaign was to alert people to the fact that communists were "boring from within."[86] Cardinal O'Connell gave his blessing to the campaign and agreed to "cooperate in the work which the Knights of Columbus are doing to combat Atheistic Communism in this country."[87] The campaign opened with a mass meeting in Boston in November 1937 attended by 500 knights. The principal speaker was Dr. George Derry, Director of the Knights' Department of Social Education. Derry warned his fellow knights not to be complacent because "It can happen here." The strategy of the Communist party, he told the crowd, was to capture labor unions, "seduce" the CIO into a farmer-labor coalition, and play on the hard times wrought by the depression to bring about a social revolution. Another speaker was Reverend Michael Ahern, a Jesuit teacher at Weston College and director of the Archdiocese's Sunday radio program, the Catholic Truth Hour. Ahern reminded the Knights of the Catholic tradition of using Church endowments from wealthy parishioners to take care of the poor. Communist revolution comes about, he said, "in direct proportion to the denial of Catholic practices and principles."[88] The message that comes across loud and clear is that to be a good Catholic, one had to be anticommunist.

Massachusetts knights brought the campaign to combat communism to the local level by pressuring municipal authorities to censor films favorable to the Loyalist

government in Spain. The issue of the Spanish Civil War deeply divided Catholics and Protestants in Massachusetts.[89] Cardinal O'Connell was particularly outspoken in his denunciation of what he believed was a communist government in Spain. The Boston Archdiocese newspaper, *The Pilot*, ran lurid stories of Catholic atrocities in Spain long after these practices declined in the summer of 1936.[90] Supporters of the Loyalist government saw the Spanish Civil War as an epic struggle between Democracy and Fascism. The most visible support organization in Massachusetts was a medical committee, headquartered at Harvard, that raised funds to send an ambulance to the Loyalist government. Once again, the antagonists were Irish Catholics and Yankee intellectuals. When support committees organized film showings sympathetic to the Loyalist cause, local Knights finally had a concrete issue.

In February 1938, local Catholics called on Fall River Mayor Alexander Murray to ban a meeting sponsored by the Friends of the Lincoln Brigade at which the Spanish War film "Heart of Spain" was to be screened. Mayor Murray banned the meeting because the film was "communistic and not in the best interests of the community." Fall River's police chief told reporters: "I will have my men arrest any speaker whose remarks are subversive to the government." Two days after the banned film showing, Fall River authorities allowed a pro-Franco meeting to take place that was attended by Governor Hurley.[91] In April 1938, the Mayor of Brockton

banned a showing of "Heart of Spain" in a municipal auditorium. When organizers found a private auditorium, the building inspector condemned the hall because the seats were not nailed down.[92] In May 1938, the Norwood School Committee revoked a permit for the Friends of Spanish Democracy to hold a lecture in the school auditorium when Knights and other Catholic groups protested. Two weeks earlier, the school committee had granted a permit for a pro-Franco meeting.[93] In July 1938, Provincetown selectmen banned a showing of "Spain in Flames" when the local American Legion post protested.

In the summer of 1938, the Friends of Spanish Democracy found obstacles at every turn when they announced a screening of "Blockade" in Boston. The State Deputy of the Knights of Columbus asked the League of Catholic Women to organize the protest in Boston. The League, organized in 1910 by Cardinal O'Connell in response to the Protestant clubwomen's movement that excluded Catholic women, initially focused on educational programs for wealthy Catholic matrons. In the 1930s, Cardinal O'Connell asked the League to "speak for Catholic interests at legislative hearings on subjects concerning the home and family life."[94] The League became very active in legislative battles over the Child Labor Amendment and birth control.[95] In 1934, its president, Lillian Slattery, began speaking out against communism. Although some fellow League members thought Slattery's foray into "political matters" inappropriate,

their complaint to Cardinal O'Connell fell on deaf ears.[96] Slattery lectured on communism at local women's organizations, like the Scituate Women's Betterment Club. From 1935 until her death in 1938, Slattery vigorously organized countless formal and informal lectures on the menace of communism.[97] By 1938, the League was primed to take on the task of closing down "Blockade" in Boston.

The Catholic women first appealed to the Boston City Council, claiming that the movie was "communistic" and that it appealed for help for the Spanish Loyalist cause. The City Council agreed and voted unanimously to ask Mayor Maurice Tobin to ban the film. Tobin did not fall in line, however, and insisted on seeing the film. When Tobin announced that he would allow it to be screened, the Catholic women took their protest to Governor Hurley. Senator Burke, a former member of the special commission, endorsed the demand that the Governor revoke the license of any theatre showing the film.[98] The Catholic women lost their battle, however, and the film was shown.

A similar battle took place in Worcester. When a Loyalist support organization announced a screening of "Blockade," students from Holy Cross College protested. Initially, the mayor agreed to ban the film on the grounds that it would incite riot. But, when the Civil Liberties Union interceded, the Mayor agreed to submit the film to the Worcester Board of Motion Pictures. The Board consisted of 62 residents from all walks of life, who watched the film

and voted 39 to 23 to permit it to be shown. No riots ensued.[99]

Like the teachers' oath fight, the campaign of lay Catholics to stop leftists from organizing support for the Loyalist government in Spain was very noisy with impassioned spokesmen on both sides. The campaign drew great publicity particularly when public officials balked at censorship. Like the special commission, the grass roots campaign among lay Catholics achieved limited success. The source of this anticommunist initiative was the Catholic Church; the Vatican identified the issue while local groups identified the target.

## Conclusion

Returning to historiographical questions raised in chapter one, what happened in Massachusetts during the depression does not fit any of the competing paradigms. However, it may be unfair to expect models developed to explain postwar anticommunism--what most writers refer to as McCarthyism--to explain prewar anticommunism as well. However, if these models do not work, what does? The evidence of anticommunism in Massachusetts during the depression suggests that no one source was at work. Police harassment, the teachers' oath, the special commission, and lay Catholic opposition to the Loyalist cause in Spain are all distinct anticommunist initiatives springing from different needs and circumstances.

The least surprising of depression era anticommunist initiatives is harassment of radicals and communist-led unions by local authorities. This was nothing new in the commonwealth. On the other hand, the teachers' oath law was a depression era anticommunist initiative new in the commonwealth, if not in the country. The Fish committee report, the American Legion, and Hearst press created a national stir about Red teachers in the United States that, in Massachusetts, played right into long standing Yankee-Irish antagonism. Of all the anticommunist initiatives in the depression, the teachers' oath was the most contested. Supporters of the oath were Catholic Democrats, liberal Republicans with working class sympathies and arch-conservative Republicans. The special commission was a home grown anticommunist initiative championed largely by the right wing. It was not derivative of federal initiatives to establish the House Un-American Activities Committee because its final report was issued before Chairman Martin Dies even began holding hearings. Although it named many names, it did not create a statewide clamor to stop communist organizing in the state. When lay Catholics organized to stop pro-Loyalist support groups, they were following the lead of their church.

The old paradigms, top down or bottom up explanations, do not help us understand depression era anticommunism in Massachusetts because issues of ethnicity and class muddy the waters considerably. There was no one source driving

anticommunist initiatives in the 1930s. Instead, there were several sources, each with different prejudices and different goals. Catholics feared for their church, Red Squads wanted a docile labor force, and conservative isolationist Yankees hated Jews and Bolsheviks. These forces never consciously united to fight communism in the commonwealth but rather bumped into each other doing the same thing at critical moments.

## Notes

[1]J. Joseph Huthmacher, *Massachusetts People and Politics, 1919-1933* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1959), pp. 195-196.

[2]Charles H. Trout, *Boston, the Great Depression, and the New Deal* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977), pp. 81, 85, 174-75.

[3]Huthmacher, *Massachusetts People*, p. 225.

[4]Trout, *Boston*, pp. 149, 171.

[5]Testimony of Samuel D. McLeod, Chief of Police, New Bedford and Martin Feeny, Chief of Police, Fall River. Congress, House, Special Committee to Investigate Communist Activities in the United States, *Investigation of Communist Propaganda* (hereinafter referred to as "Fish committee hearings"), 71st Cong., 2nd Sess., November 7, 1930, pt. 3, vol. 5, pp. 38-54.

[6]Robert A. Bakeman, Field Secretary, American Civil Liberties Union, "Lawrence Massachusetts Decides!," Civil Liberties Union of Massachusetts Collection, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston (hereinafter referred to as CLUM), Box 1, Folder "CLUM Correspondence, 1931"; *Boston Herald*, April 30, 1931.

[7]"Lawrence Questionnaire, 1937," CLUM, Box 1, Folder "CLUM Correspondence, 1937."

[8]*Lowell Sunday Telegram*, May 9, 1933.

[9]For the KKK, see "Memorandum on Usurpations of the Mayors of Boston," CLUM, Box 1, Folder "Censorship, 1928-32"; for Margaret Sanger and supporters of birth control, see letter of Gardner Jackson to John S. Codman, April 16, 1929, CLUM, Box 1, Folder "CLUM Correspondence, 1929."

[10]*Boston Herald*, September 6, 1929.

[11]*Boston Herald*, October 4, 1931.

[12]*Boston Herald*, August 21, 1932.

[13]John S. Codman to Civil Liberties Commission of Massachusetts, June 1, 1931, CLUM, Box 1, Folder "CLUM Correspondence, 1931."

[14]Trout, *Boston*, pp. 55-57.

[15]*Boston Globe*, May 1, 1931.

[16]*Boston Herald*, April 4, 1933.

[17]Fish Committee hearings, pp. 1-22.

[18]David J.Goldberg, *A Tale of Three Cities: Labor Organization and Protest in Paterson, Passaic, and Lawrence, 1916-1921* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1989), pp. 145-147.

[19]Trout, *Boston*, p. 57.

[20]*Boston Herald*, April 30, 1931.

[21]*Boston Globe*, May 1, 1931.

[22]Calvin Coolidge, "Enemies of the Republic," *Delineator*, Vol. XVIII (June 1921), 4-5, 65-67; (July 1921), 10-11, 38-39; (August 1921), 10-11, 42. *See also*, Robert W. Iversen, *The Communists & The Schools* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1959), pp. 13-17.

[23]American Civil Liberties Union, *Land of the Free, the Story of the Fight for Civil Liberty, 1934-35* (New York, 1935), p. 46. After the 1936 presidential election and its ringing defeat for the conservative Liberty Lobby forces, the activities of "professional patriots" showed a marked decline. American Civil Liberties Union, *Let Freedom Ring! The Story of Civil Liberty, 1936-37* (New York, 1937), p. 46.

[24]American Legion, Department of Massachusetts, *Proceedings of Annual Meeting*, 1935, p. 41.

[25]Zechariah Chafee to James B. Conant, December 9, 1935, Zechariah Chafee Papers, Special Collections, Harvard Law School Library, Cambridge (hereinafter referred to as "Chafee papers"), Box 32, Folder 19; James True Associates, *Industrial Control Reports*, No. 125 (November 23, 1935), No. 126 (November 30, 1935), Chafee papers, Box 32, Folder 19.

[26]The chronology of consideration of teachers' oath laws in state legislatures is as follows:

1917 The District of Columbia passed an oath law.
1919 Two states passed oath laws: Ohio and Rhode Island.
1921 Four states passed oath laws: Colorado, Nevada, Oregon and South Dakota.
1923 Two states passed oath laws: Oklahoma and West Virginia.

1925 Florida passed an oath law.
1929 Indiana passed an oath law.
1931 Four states passed oath laws: California, Montana, North Dakota and Washington.
Maine considered a bill but it was killed in committee.
1934 New York passed an oath law.
Maryland passed an oath law that was vetoed by the governor.
1935 Six states, Arizona, Georgia, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Jersey and Vermont passed oath laws.
The District of Columbia strengthened its existing law.
Ten states considered but did not pass an oath bill: the Connecticut bill never left committee; the Delaware bill was vetoed by the governor; the Illinois, Kansas, Nebraska, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Texas, Utah, and Wisconsin bills were voted down in the legislature.
Four states were approached by representatives of the American Legion but no bill was introduced: Alabama, Arkansas, Iowa and Minnesota.

By the end of 1935, only 12 state legislatures--Idaho, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, New Hampshire, New Mexico, North Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, Wyoming--had never considered a teachers loyalty oath. (Henry R. Linville, *Oaths of Loyalty for Teachers* (American Association of University Professors, 1936)).

[27]By the mid-1930s, Cardinal O'Connell had presided over the Archdiocese of Boston for almost thirty years. He knew the Irish Catholic communicants in the diocese very well. The son of an immigrant Lynn shoemaker, he had become sophisticated, cultured and very conservative. The quotation is from his 1936 pastoral letter, "Thy Kingdom Come," read at every mass in the Archdiocese and reprinted in *The Pilot*, January 4, 1936.

[28]"Communism and Atheism," *The Pilot*, February 8, 1936.

[29]*Boston Globe*, April 5, 1936.

[30]"The Question Box," *The Pilot*, February 2, 1935.

[31]"Thy Kingdom Come," *The Pilot*, January 4, 1936.

[32]Ibid.

[33]*North Adams Transcript*, December 16, 1935.

[34]Undated news clipping, CLUM, Box 1, Folder "CLUM Correspondence, 1938."

[35]*The Pilot*, May 16, 1936.

[36]David H. Bennett, *Demagogues in the Depression, American Radicals and the Union Party, 1932-1936* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1969); Alan Brinkley, *Voices of Protest, Huey Long, Father Coughlin, and the Great Depression* (New York: Knopf, 1982).

[37]*Boston Globe*, August 13, 1935. There are no extant records to document Coughlin's claim about membership in his National Union for Social Justice.

[38]*New York Times*, June 24, 26, 29; October 13, 1936.

[39]James Michael Curley, *I'd Do It Again, A Record of All My Uproarious Years* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1957), p. 299.

[40]American Civil Liberties Union, "Press Release," November 11, 1935, CLUM, Box 1, Folder "CLUM Correspondence, 1935."

[41]*Boston Globe*, June 7, 12, 1935.

[42]Henry Parkman to Zechariah Chafee, February 26, 1935, Chafee papers, Box 31, Folder 2.

[43]*Boston Globe*, April 3, 4, 1935.

[44]*Boston Post*, May 29, 1935.

[45]*Boston Post*, June 13, 1935.

[46]American Legion, Department of Massachusetts, *Annual Proceedings, 1935*, p. 41.

[47]*Boston Globe*, January 8, 1935. Wendell D. Howie, *The Reign of James the First, A Historical Record of the Administration of James M. Curley as Governor of Massachusetts* (Wendell D. Howie, 1936), pp. 74-76. In 1935, the Division did hold a public meeting on Americanism at Gardner Auditorium in Boston. Speakers included Governor Curley, John Kearney representing the AFL who spoke on "Labor's Interest in Americanism," Preston Clark representing the Associated Industries of Massachusetts who spoke on "Industry's Interest in Americanism," and Eva Whiting, President of the Women's Educational and Industrial League. Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Department of

Education, *Annual Report for Year Ending November 30, 1935*, pt. I, p. 14.

[48]*North Adams Transcript*, December 18, 1935. In Massachusetts, all appointments have to be approved by the Governor's Council, an eight person body elected by the voters. At noon on December 18, 1935 Curley announced that he was going to submit Smith's name for reappointment. He then met with Lieutenant Governor Hurley and the five Democrats on the Council behind closed doors for more than an hour. At the Council meeting immediately following their meeting, Curley first submitted Smith's name. The three Republican members and Lieutenant Governor Hurley voted to confirm but were outvoted 5-4. Curley then submitted Reardon's name and the five Democrats, plus Lieutenant Governor Hurley, voted to confirm.

Previous to the vote, Curley had engineered an endorsement of Reardon from the Board of Directors of the Massachusetts Teachers Federation, an affiliate of the National Education Association representing approximately 80 percent of the public school teachers in the commonwealth. One month before Reardon's appointment, that body had adopted a unanimous resolution commending and supporting Dr. Smith. After a month's worth of arm-twisting by Curley, the Board of Directors convened a special meeting the day before Reardon's appointment and voted, 12-8, to recommend Reardon. John Davoren of Milford introduced the substitute resolution by telling the Board of Directors that Governor Curley "expected" their endorsement. Davoren, who led the pro-Reardon forces, was president of the Massachusetts Teachers Civil League. The pro-Smith forces were led by Mrs. Grace Woodward, a teacher at the Roosevelt School in Melrose and president of the Massachusetts Teachers Federation. *Boston Herald*, December 18, 19, 20, 1935; *Boston Post*, December 18, 1935.

[49]*Boston Globe*, April 4, 1935.

[50]*The Massachusetts Teacher*, Vol. XVIII, No. 3, December 1938.

[51]*Boston Globe*, April 3, 1935; *Boston Post*, March 6, 1936.

[52]"Repeal the Teachers Oath Law," CLUM, Box 2, Folder "Miscellaneous Printed, 1936."

[53]*Boston Globe*, April 4, 1935.

[54]*Boston Globe*, March 24, 1936.

[55]*Boston Globe*, March 24, 1936.

[56]Ibid.

[57]*Boston Globe*, March 31, April 7, 1936.

[58]*Who's Who in Massachusetts*, Vol. 2 (Chicago, 1946); George Wolfskill, *Revolt of the Conservatives, A History of the American Liberty League* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1962), pp. 231-234.

[59]Rt. Rev. Msgr. Peter Guilday to Samuel Eliot Morison, February 4, 1936, Samuel Eliot Morison Papers, Archives, Pusey Library, Harvard University, Cambridge.

[60]Resolution adopted May 13, 1930, attached to a letter from John E. Swift to William Cardinal O'Connell, May 16, 1930, Knights of Columbus Papers, Archives of the Archdiocese of Boston, Box 3-14.

[61]*See, e.g.* John E. Swift to His Eminence William Cardinal O'Connell, March 12, 1928, Knights of Columbus Papers, AABo, Box 3-12.

[62]Program of Patriot's Day Banquet, April 19, 1931, Knights of Columbus Papers, AABo, Box 3-15.

[63]I have identified Jewish legislators by name, not a very precise measure. One was identified in the press as being Jewish. In 1935, the Jewish Democrats who voted in favor of the teachers oath were Albert Rubin of Fall River and Bernard Finkelstein of Boston and the Jewish Republicans were Samuel Cohen and Abraham Zion of Boston and Frederick Reinstein of Revere. One Jewish legislator, Republican Philip Sherman of Somerville, voted against the bill.

[64]The 1935 roll call vote on the teachers' oath bill was taken on June 12, 1935 and is recorded in the *House Journal* at pages 1290-1296; the 1937 roll call vote on the bill to repeal the teachers' oath was taken on March 18, 1937 and is recorded in the *House Journal* at pages 596-598; the 1939 roll call vote on the repeal bill was taken on February 16, 1939 and is recorded in the *House Journal* at page 442. Ethnicity was determined based on membership in clubs and organizations listed in a document prepared by the Civil Liberties Union of Massachusetts that gives biographical sketches of each legislator in the 1940-41 session. CLUM, Box 4, Folder "Mass. Legislators, Profiles."

[65]Ibid.

[66]See Gary Gerstle's discussion of political language in *Working-Class Americanism: The Politics of Labor in a*

*Textile City, 1914-1960* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp. 14-15.

[67]Robert Moses Lovett, "Witch-Hunting in Massachusetts," *The New Republic* (December 1, 1937), pp. 96-97.

[68]*Boston Transcript*, April 21, 1924; *Springfield Republican*, October 20, 1924. *See also*, Huthmacher, *Massachusetts People*, p. 88.

[69]The political work of the Sentinels was national in scope and focussed on reining in the gains women made through Progressive era legislation. The Sentinels were the leading force of a conservative backlash against women in the 1920s. In a 1929 letter explaining the work and purposes of the Sentinels, the organization claimed as their principal accomplishments defeat of the Child Labor Amendment, repeal of the Maternity Act, and opposition to the establishment of a federal Department of Education. They identified themselves by the organizations they opposed. The list represents an organizational Who's Who of the first wave of feminism in the U.S.: General Federation of Women's Clubs, National Trade Union League, National Council of Jewish Women, Young Women's Christian Association, National League of Women Voters, National Consumer's League, National Women's Party, National Congress of Parents and Teachers, National Council of Women, American Child Health Association, National Women's Christian Temperance Union, American Association of University Women, National Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs, and the Children's Bureau and Women's Bureau of the Department of Labor. (Unsigned letter to Samuel Fisher, New York City, February 6, 1929, Alexander Lincoln Papers, Schlesinger Library, Harvard University, Cambridge, Box 1, Folder "Papers, 1929-1940.")

Leaders of the Sentinels, such as Alexander Lincoln, may well have been anti-Semitic; but it was not the reason why the organization was founded. For conservative middle class and elite Americans to have not been anti-Semitic in this time period would have been exceptional. Class was the issue that motivated the Sentinels. Alexander Lincoln told the Massachusetts legislative committee holding hearings on the Child Labor Amendment in 1924 that "there is a large class of persons who are not helped by being kept in school up to the age of 16." Many persons under 16 "are benefited by being able to do certain kinds of labor." (Lincoln papers, Box 5, File 27.)

After Curley's 1936 attack on Lincoln for anti-Semitism, Lincoln retired from public life. (Lincoln's retirement may also have been the result of Franklin Roosevelt's sound defeat of the Liberty League forces in 1936). In 1939, Lincoln contemplated a return to public

office and called on Gabriel Stern, a Boston advertising agency executive, to rally support for him. In March 1939, Stern collected dozens of letters from leading Jewish businessmen, lawyers and rabbis in Massachusetts supporting Lincoln's reentry into public life. (Lincoln papers, Box 7, File 45)

[70]John Higham, "Anti-Semitism and American Culture," in John Higham, *Send These to Me, Immigration in Urban America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1984), p. 168.

[71]*Boston Globe*, November 5, 1936 and May 2, 1937; *Brookline Chronicle*, November 5, 1936. Sybil Holmes' obituary states she was Assistant Attorney General from 1930-1934. The contemporary sources are more likely to be accurate. *Boston Globe*, July 20, 1979.

[72]The mother of Senate President Samuel Holmes Wragg was Mary Holmes a relative of Sybil Holmes' father, Henry Holmes, who represented Chelsea in the legislature for many years. Ibid.; *Who's Who in Massachusetts*, Vol. One, 1940-41.

[73]For ethnicity of Sherman, Holtz, and Julian, see *Who's Who in Massachusetts*, Vol. Two, 1946. Sirois was an ambitious politician, known to be the "personal representative" of Leverett Saltonstall in Essex County. (Letter from Kenneth Johnson to Samuel Eliot Morison, April 8, 1936, Morison Papers, Archives of Harvard University, Pusey Library, Cambridge.)

[74]*Boston Globe*, September 30, 1939.

[75]Commonwealth of Massachusetts, *Report of the Special Commission to Investigate the Activities Within This Commonwealth of Communist, Fascist, Nazi and Other Subversive Organizations, So Called*, May 27, 1938, House Doc. No. 2100 (hereinafter referred to as "Special Commission Report").

[76]For examples of purloined documents from Communist party files see Special Commission Report, pp. 50-54, 67, 125-130, 230-231, 305, 313, 314, 332, 341 and 387; for examples of instructions from the Central Committee, see pp. 121, 294 and 305; for lists of party functionaries and alleged "fellow travellers," see pp. 65, 110, 116, 122, 130, 134, 141, 144, 148-153, 187, 189, 200-201, 208-15, 218, 310-11, 318-21, 328, 336-37, 353, 372-74, 405-06, 444-47, 463-64, 470, 474, 476, 495-96, 499-500, 502-06, 522,23, 527, 351, 533, 543 and 557-61.

[77]*Boston Globe*, June 23, 1937.

[78]Massachusetts National Guard, *Historical and Pictorial Review, 1939* (Baton Rouge, La.: Army and Navy Publishing Co., 1939).

[79]The introduction to the report includes the following acknowledgement: "The Commission acknowledges with deep appreciation the assistance given it by the Adjutant General [of the National Guard], the Department of Public Safety, the Police Commissioner of Boston, and the police departments of various cities and towns, which made it possible to obtain information which otherwise it could not have had with the resources at hand." Special Commission Report, p. 11.

[80]Special Commission Report, p. 148-153.

[81]*Boston Globe*, October 28, 1937.

[82]Massachusetts, House of Representatives, *Journal of Proceedings*, April 26, 1938, p. 997.

[83]*Boston Traveler*, March 24, 1939.

[84]*The Chronicle* (Brookline, Mass.), November 5, 1936, November 11, 1938.

[85]Christopher J. Kauffman, *Faith and Fraternalism, The History of the Knights of Columbus, 1882-1982* (New York: Harper & Row, 1982), p. 330.

[86]*Boston Globe*, June 23, 1937.

[87]William Cardinal O'Connell to Martin Carmody, October 30, 1937, Knights of Columbus papers, AABo, Box 4-4.

[88]*Boston Globe*, November 4, 1937.

[89]Donald F. Crosby, "Boston's Catholics and the Spanish Civil War: 1936-1939," *New England Quarterly* 44 (1971): 82-100.

[90]*The Pilot*, September 19, 1936, February 20, 1937, September 5, 1939.

[91]*Fall River Herald News*, February 13, 1938; Civil Liberties Union of Massachusetts, *Newsletter on Civil Liberties*, Vol. II, No. 2, February 1938.

[92]Civil Liberties Union of Massachusetts, *Civil Liberties Bulletin*, Vol. II, No. 4, April 1938.

[93]Civil Liberties Union of Massachusetts, *Civil Liberties Bulletin*, July 1938.

[94]Circular from J.F. Minehan, Secretary to Cardinal O'Connell, September 22, 1934, League of Catholic Women papers, Archives of the Archdiocese of Boston, Box 2-12.

[95]Lillian G. Slattery, President, League of Catholic Women to Rt. Rev. R.J. Haberlin, January 30, 1931, League of Catholic Women Papers, AABo, Box 2-10; Lillian G. Slattery to Rt. Rev. Richard A. Burke, February 5, 1931, Box 2-10; Acting Secretary to Mrs. Edward C. Donnelly, January 17, 1935, Box 2-12; Lillian G. Slattery to "Dear Friend," June 5, 1929, Box 2-10.

[96]Mrs. C.G. Flynn, President to Rev. Father Phelan, 1934, League of Catholic Women papers, AABo, Box 2-12.

[97]Lucille A. Harrington, President to "Member of the Board of Trustees," undated, League of Catholic Women papers, AABo, Box 2-11; Mrs. Francis E. Slattery, Chairman, Executive Board to "Dear Member," November 13, 1935, Box 2-10; Rt. Rev. M.J. Splaine to Monsignor Minihan, October 21, 1937, Box 2-14.

[98]Civil Liberties Union of Massachusetts, *Civil Liberties Bulletin*, July 1938.

[99]Civil Liberties Union of Massachusetts, *Civil Liberties Bulletin*, April 1938.

# CHAPTER 4

## WARTIME ANTICOMMUNISM

Anticommunist sentiment continued throughout the war years in Massachusetts. During the period of the Soviet-Nazi pact, from August 1939 to June 1941, police and municipal harassment of Communist party antiwar activities increased. At the same time, the legislature debated a bill aimed at communists to keep "subversive" parties off the ballot. With the Soviet Union allied to Hitler, anticommunist liberals in Massachusetts resigned from organizations too closely connected to popular front politics. After Germany invaded the Soviet Union, the Communist party joined the war effort at home and the government temporarily halted anticommunist initiatives. However, radicals who continued to oppose the war, such as conscientious objectors, faced stiff opprobrium in their communities.

During the war, isolationist ideology emphasized anticommunism and anti-Semitism. Father Coughlin's followers found support among some Irish Catholics in Massachusetts. In 1939, Coughlin-backed Christian Front activities surfaced in Boston. As the nation plunged into war alongside the Red Army, the Christian Front flourished among men left behind on Boston's home front.[1] Coughlinites were not the only isolationists to continue anticommunist activities during the war. National leaders of the America

First movement joined local isolationists on public platforms in Boston to argue that subversives at home posed an even greater threat to national security than the Axis powers.

By following the thread of anticommunism on the local level, we see that the wartime alliance between the Soviet Union and the United States did not halt anticommunist activity. Scholars studying anticommunism on the national level, where the Roosevelt Administration accepted Communist party assistance after the Nazi invasion of the Soviet Union, missed the important link between the prewar "little Red Scare" and postwar "McCarthyism" expressed at the local level.[2] This chapter sheds light on that link in Massachusetts.

## Nazi-Soviet Pact

When the Soviet Union announced its alliance with the Third Reich in August 1939, the Communist party in the United States abruptly reversed its call for war against fascism. In Massachusetts, the party's "Yanks Are Not Coming" committee organized antiwar activities as vigorously as it previously organized for United States involvement in fighting fascism in Europe. The sudden shift in position, prompted only by foreign policy needs of the Soviet Union, fueled the fires of anticommunism. Detractors used the shift to bolster their claim that communists in the United States were puppets of the Soviet Union; liberals, who

joined the party or front organizations to fight fascism, resigned in disgust; pro-British Yankees denounced antiwar communists as a fifth column. Overnight, the Soviet-Nazi pact eliminated whatever legitimacy the Communist party gained through its popular front activities. This opened the door to a new wave of harassment against communist activities in Massachusetts.

In 1939, the Boston Red Squad surreptitiously searched CP headquarters without a warrant. No action followed against the police.[3] Across the river in Cambridge, police confiscated 5,000 antiwar flyers from Young Communist League leafletters in Harvard Square.[4] In November 1939, the Harvard Corporation banned Earl Browder, chairman of the Communist party in the United States, from lecturing to the John Reed Society of Harvard, a "non-political organization composed of students interested in the study of scientific socialism," because it would be "in bad taste."[5] The next month, the Cambridge City Council passed a law prohibiting quotations from Stalin, or photographs of Stalin, in any magazine, book or paper distributed by the City.[6] Presumably, this law covered public school textbooks, although there is no evidence of its enforcement in Cambridge.

In spring 1940, Boston plainclothes officers broke up an antiwar meeting of "The Yanks Are Not Coming" committee to prevent the head of the Massachusetts branch of the Veterans of Foreign Wars from speaking at the meeting.[7] In

May 1940, B'nai Brith invited J. Edgar Hoover, director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, to address their annual banquet. Hoover told 2,000 B'nai Brith members and supporters that the greatest problem facing the nation was "fellow travellers who do the bidding of Communists."[8]

In spring 1941, the Worcester chief of police denied a permit to the Communist party for an outdoor antiwar meeting because it would be "unpatriotic."[9] In Boston, the Charlestown naval ship yard dismissed two men who were suspected of belonging to the party because they were "ill disposed to the good order and happiness of the United States."[10] At the same time, the FBI trained three battalions of Boston police in espionage and sabotage. Police commissioner Joseph Timility told a Harvard Business School audience there was "close collaboration on matters of national defense and fifth column activity" in the commonwealth.[11] Given J. Edgar Hoover's views on the Communist party, that surely meant communist activity as much as it meant fascist activity. Evidence of this federal-local law enforcement collaboration surfaced at the 1941 May Day rally on Boston Common when plainclothed Boston police, FBI agents, and Army intelligence officers openly monitored 500 people gathered to hear local Communist party leaders Otis Hood and Ann Burlak, and Ben Davis, associate editor of the Communist party newspaper.[12]

In 1941, the Massachusetts legislature debated a bill, sponsored by the American Legion, to keep candidates from

"un-American" parties off the ballot. While proponents of the bill paid lip service to opposing fascists as well as communists, the real target of the bill was the Communist party. Legislators knew that Communist party candidates had never come anywhere near an electoral victory. The purpose of the bill was to prevent communists from having a platform during campaigns and raising difficult questions. Mrs. LaRue Brown, spokeswoman for the Massachusetts League of Women Voters, told the House Elections Committee that the "real desire of the proponents was to ... stop the Communists from talking."[13] When the bill reached the floor of the House, legislators changed the proscribed group from "party ... engag[ing] in or promot[ing] subversive activity" to "any party which is identified or affiliated with a foreign government or foreign political party and which exists mainly to act for, with, or on behalf of such foreign government or foreign political party."[14] This language made it crystal clear that the target of the bill was the Communist party. However, the bill's proponents did not have enough votes for passage, and the House referred it to the next session of the General Court by a vote of 80 to 57. By the following year, the nation was at war with Germany, allied with the Soviet Union. No one reintroduced the bill

When Hitler invaded the Soviet Union in June 1941, ending the Nazi-Soviet pact, the Communist party suddenly reversed policy, as it had in 1939, and now promoted U.S. involvement in the European war. The alliance of the Soviet

Union with England and France in the summer of 1941, and with the United States after Pearl Harbor in December 1941, temporarily halted government harassment of the Communist party on the state and local level in Massachusetts. The popular front, however, had already lost its liberal allies and when government-sponsored anticommunism resurfaced after the war, there were fewer voices to protest the new initiatives.

The Communist party's second abrupt reversal on the need to fight fascism in Europe fostered anticommunist sentiment within liberal organizations. In 1940, the American Civil Liberties Union's national governing body passed a provision prohibiting supporters of "totalitarian dictatorships" from serving on its board of directors or staff. Based on this new policy, the ACLU's national board of directors purged Communist party member Elizabeth Gurley Flynn from its ranks.[15] The Civil Liberties Union of Massachusetts (CLUM), an affiliate of the ACLU but not a subsidiary chapter, disagreed with the ACLU and never adopted an anticommunist policy. Mary Elizabeth Sanger, executive secretary of CLUM, told Roger Baldwin, national director of ACLU, in no uncertain terms that: "We do not require oaths of allegiance nor 'opinions tests' of our members or officers and we have loyalty and allegiance. We allow our officers and members of our Executive Committee full civil rights and freedom to sponsor such meetings as they choose."[16]

In the short run, CLUM's refusal to purge suspected Communist party members from its ranks meant that influential, liberal supporters resigned. Henry Hamm, for instance, resigned as associate counsel and member of CLUM in 1942 because executive committee members worked on the "Free Browder convention." He would not belong to an organization with a "strong minority block" on its executive committee that influenced policy and made CLUM a "subsidiary of which the Communist party is the holding company."[17] In the long run, however, CLUM's refusal to toe the line meant one clear voice would continue to be heard opposing anticommunist initiatives after the war.

## Conscientious Objectors

Radicals outside the Communist party who continued to oppose the war after Pearl Harbor faced stiff censure from their communities. Although World War II produced less than half as many conscientious objectors as World War I, COs were treated as pariahs during the "Good War." Most spent the war in CO camps, virtual prisons where they performed manual labor for the state.[18] More than 95 percent of the men who refused to fight in World War II did so on religious grounds. Radicals who refused to fight belonged to the Socialist party and were a hated minority within a hated minority.

Carl Walz, a graduate of Amherst College and member of the Socialist party was one such CO. Walz taught German and

history at Turners Falls high school in a small factory town on the Connecticut River in western Massachusetts. He helped charter the Northfield branch of the American Federation of Teachers, a left-leaning union alternative to the National Educational Association. Walz's principal and school committee knew about his politics and told him he could teach so long as he did not bring "socialist propaganda" into the classroom. From 1934 until 1942, school authorities renewed his contract with annual $100 raises. On weekends and when school was in recess, Walz lived in Easthampton, closer to the radical community in Springfield. During the week he lodged at the Turners Falls hotel.[19]

In October 1940, Arthur E. Burke, Superintendent of Schools, called Walz into his office to verify a "scandalous" rumor making the rounds of local barrooms. According to the gossip, Walz had persuaded a local boy not to register for the draft. Walz denied advising anyone about a matter he considered so "personal and important." When asked his own draft status, Walz replied that he intended to register as a conscientious objector. Burke told Walz that no true patriot could be a CO and asked him to reconsider his position.[20]

In May 1941, the school committee held up renewal of Walz's contract ostensibly because of declining enrollment in the courses he taught. Walz thought it was because of his pacifism and sought the advice of Bernard Dirks, a

school committeeman who had been a CO during World War I. Walz also contacted the Massachusetts Civil Liberties Union to line up legal support in case he was fired. After stalling for six weeks, the school committee finally renewed Walz's contract for the 1941-42 academic year.[21]

The following year, however, the school committee voted not to renew Walz's contract. By this time Walz had officially registered as a CO. Superintendent Burke admitted calling his draft board in May 1942 to find out his draft status. Walz learned about the school committee's action from the local newspaper. When he confronted the Superintendent, Burke told Walz no reason had been stated for not renewing the contract. Since Massachusetts tenure law required school boards to give a reason for contract non-renewal, Walz wrote the committee suggesting they seek legal advice. He also requested a leave of absence having been ordered to report to a CO camp in New Hampshire.[22]

On July 7, 1942, the school committee held an emergency session to consider the Walz case. All eight members of the committee were upper-middle-class residents. The town's factory workers were not represented at all. Five of the men ran local businesses--a drug store, a trucking company, a furniture store, a building contractor, and a coal company. Two men were professionals--an architect and an insurance salesman/newspaper reporter. One man ran a large commercial farm. The two women on the school committee were married to leading men in the community, one being a

doctor's wife and the other a retired businessman's wife.[23] Superintendent Burke attended all school committee meetings, including the emergency meeting to discuss Walz. According to the chairman of the school board, Burke "guided and directed" them "without attempting to usurp the legal powers of the board itself."[24]

At the emergency meeting, one school board member suggested they simply drop German from the curriculum thereby eliminating Walz's job without having to fire him. Bernard Dirks, the World War I CO, urged board members to be honest about their reasons. When Dirks later testified in court about the meeting, he remembered saying "if the real objection is to Walz himself, let us come out in the open as to that reason." One member said he did not like Walz's pacifist beliefs; another said "a conscientious objector is not a proper person to be in the public schools"; another was very angry that Walz did not have to serve when his son was in the Pacific aboard an air craft carrier. Superintendent Burke told the committee "I do not want Walz or any other conscientious objector working in my school system."[25] At the end of the meeting, the committee voted to discontinue offering German classes and dismissed Walz "with reason."[26]

Walz sued the school board, seeking reinstatement of his job and money damages for lost wages. His case was heard by Superior Court Judge Thomas J. Hammond, an old line Yankee. A Republican, Congregationalist, Amherst College

and Harvard Law School graduate, veteran of World War I, and former district attorney for western Massachusetts, Hammond was totally antagonistic to Walz's socialist beliefs. During the hearing, he dismissed outright Walz's claim for back wages on the grounds that Walz had been in a CO camp and unable to work. When Walz's lawyer explained to the judge that conscientious objectors were allowed to leave camp in order to perform community service, Judge Hammond exploded. He could not believe that the government would allow COs to stay home and earn a living while other men had to go overseas. In September 1942, Hammond denied Walz's petition in its entirety finding that the school board acted properly when it dismissed Walz "with reason."[27] No higher court ever reviewed the case.

The Walz case gives us a window on small town attitudes in Massachusetts towards socialists who opposed military service during World War II. There was little sympathy for these young men with pacifist political principles. In Turners Falls, school officials would not tolerate such political deviance. Walz taught at the high school at sufferance. He could engage in radical political work so long it was far away and could not influence the town's high school students. When Walz's pacifist position became publicly known in town, he was fired.

## Isolationism

Some people who believed the United States should stay out of the war in Europe became avid McCarthyites a decade later. This should come as no surprise, since isolationist ideology rested on twin pillars of anticommunism and anti-Semitism. After the war, revelations about the Holocaust made anti-Semitism unpalatable--at least publicly. Anticommunism, however, resurged with a vengeance. By looking at isolationists, we find another unbroken thread of anticommunism in Massachusetts from the "little Red Scare" to "McCarthyism."[28]

There were three sources of isolationism on the state and local level: the America First movement and the Protestant far right, Catholic Church leaders and politicians, and followers of Father Coughlin. The Christian Front, a direct action offshoot of Coughlin's Social Justice movement, flourished among some Catholics in Boston. The Front, which embraced the most vitriolic expressions of anti-Semitism and anticommunism, began in 1939 and continued after Pearl Harbor, peaking in the winter of 1943-1944.

In Massachusetts, the America First Committee and the Protestant far right were the least important of these three sources of isolationism. The America First Committee originated in the mid-West, among powerful industrialists and Senators from Populist states. Robert McCormick's *Chicago Tribune* led the ideological battle against

intervention. A group of Chicago industrialists, headed by Robert E. Wood of Sears, Roebuck and Thomas S. Hammond of the Whiting Corporation, organized the committee in 1940 to keep the United States out of war. They believed Germany was going to win and that German economic hegemony in Europe would lead to the fall of the Soviet Union. They hoped these events would create significant investment opportunities for American industrialists. The Committee was initially well received in the business community and among conservative newspaper publishers.[29] Its leading spokesman, Charles Lindberg, Senators Burton Wheeler from Montana, Gerald Nye from North Dakota, and Bennett Champ Clark from Missouri pushed the American First position to Congress.

Conservative Massachusetts Yankees, however, were not associated with the America First Committee as they had been during the depression with the conservative Liberty League and the Sentinels of the Republic. Theirs was a different brand of conservatism. In addition, the Yankee elite had deep, personal ties to England. The most prominent Massachusetts politicians associated with the America First position were not conservative Yankees but rather Irish Catholics--Senator David I. Walsh and Ambassador Joseph Kennedy.

Although leadership of the America First Committee did not include elite Yankees, other Bay Staters sympathized with the organization's isolationist principles. In May

1941, 3,000 people packed Boston's Symphony Hall to hear Senator Burton address an America First rally. The audience booed loudly at the mention of President Roosevelt's Lend-Lease program and cheered even louder at the mention of Charles Lindberg.[30] A year earlier, in May 1940, the American Mother's Neutrality League sponsored an outdoor rally on the Boston Common. Five thousand people came to hear Representative Martin Dies denounce the newest "Trojan horse"--internationalists leading the United Sates into war. Boston's former district attorney, John Joseph Murphy acted as moderator of the rally and later became a principal organizer for the Christian Front. Another speaker at the rally was former Representative Tommy Dorgan, "father of the teacher's oath."[31]

These rallies, however, did not draw on agrarian populist support, as they did in the mid-West, but rather on longstanding ethnic and class antagonism. In Massachusetts, support for isolationism was organized by the Catholic Church, not by the America First Committee. Political scientist John Stack, in his study of Boston's Irish, Italians and Jews during the war years, sees Irish and Italian isolationism as ethnic conflict, most clearly expressed as Anglophobia or pride for the mother country.[32] To be sure, it was that. Stack quotes the *Italian News* denouncing justification for intervention as a "tide of British falsehoods" brought by people "blinded by the shining glitter of British gold."[33] Irish hatred of the

British Empire goes centuries deep. However, what Stack misses is the political dimension of isolationism. Its meaning was richer than just Anglophobia.

Isolationism embraced a conservative world view that prized America and saw communists and Jews as enemies of Americanism. Indeed, for isolationists, communists and Jews were synonymous. The problems facing the United Sates, they argued, were not in Europe but at home. Domestic communist subversion threatened national security far more than European imperialism. Even after Pearl Harbor, with the United States allied to the Soviet Union and Hitler's atrocities against the Jewish people exposed, anti-Semitism and anticommunism continued unabated among isolationists in Massachusetts.

## Catholic Neutrality

The Catholic hierarchy in Massachusetts followed the lead of Pope Pius who remained neutral throughout World War II. While the Pope denounced anti-Semitism, he denounced communism even more strongly. His 1937 encyclical, *Divini Redemptoris*, warned that communism was the greatest menace to the world, a position he repeated *ad nauseam*. Just as the Pope called for prayer to end the war, so did Boston's Cardinal O'Connell.

In April 1940, the Cardinal urged Catholic women to pay no attention to "war propaganda" that was "exciting emotions and delusions and fears" and "trying to make us think that

one side or the other are fighting for sublime ideals." The Cardinal argued that "just because we are sorry [for people being oppressed], we do not intend to make the same mistake [and enter the war]." "The one thing we can do," he told Catholic women, "is pray for peace."[34] In June 1940, as Germany was closing in on Paris, O'Connell told Boston College graduates at their commencement that "God still rules the universe and God will protect France."[35]

In contrast to Catholic neutrality, Harvard graduates and faculty in 1940 were endorsing President Conant's call for "immediate and substantial assistance" for England and her allies. In a well publicized radio address, Conant called for a "Committee to Defend America by Aiding the Allies." Once again, Irish Catholic leaders and Yankee elite squared off on opposing sides of international issues. On Mothers Day in 1941, Senator Walsh, speaking at a communion breakfast in his hometown of Clinton, denounced "moneyed interests, the college professors and the idealists" who were leading the United States to war. He told the assembled Catholic mothers that if the U.S. went to war, they could expect their fifteen, sixteen and seventeen year old sons to be drafted.[36] On the same day in Boston, Harvard Professor William Elliott addressed the annual meeting of the Massachusetts Federation of Women's Clubs. He told these Protestant mothers that America had a duty to intervene because it was the only power left that could stop Hitler and the rise of Fascism.[37]

The editors of the *Boston Pilot*, the influential newspaper of the Boston Archdiocese, covered the war by reporting on persecution of Catholics. In March 1940, the paper reported on "Hitler's Aims to Destroy Christianity"; in August 1940, it was "Seizure of Baltic States Heavy Blow to Church."[38] The issue for the Church was never the dangers of authoritarianism; it was how the Church fared under these regimes. "Probably the most *barren* spot on earth, from a spiritual point of view is *Russia*. Here war against God never relents... Almost as bad is Germany... Most irritating is the case of Mexico. Here we have religious peace endangered where an enlightened attitude by our government would compel respect for all rights."[39] When compared to Nazis, according to the *Pilot*, Communists came out worse. Communists were sneaky and tricky like the Japanese. "While sometimes classified as Europeans," opined the *Pilot*, "it is a fact that Russians possess Asiatic mentality."

While public attention focused on Europe, the *Pilot* continued to alert its readers to the danger of communist subversion at home. "Communism is the enemy of democracy. How much more evidence shall we require before we accept this fact that the authentic Communist can never be a trustworthy ally of any democratic nation?"[40] In an editorial titled "Fifth Column," the *Pilot* proclaimed that Communist subversion was far more worrisome than Nazi subversion.[41]

> There is no considerable number of Americans in this country who have any sympathy with Nazism... Let us not forget that we have a very flourishing Fifth Column already established... Our unity is watered by the presence of a vast column made up of Communists, fellow travelers and friends of Soviet Russia... Brown Bolshevism undermined Norway, Red Bolshevism seeks to undermine us.

Even after Pearl Harbor, when the United States was allied with the Soviet Union, the *Pilot* continued to toll the tocsin. "We have declared war on Brown Bolshevism. But victory will mean little if we allow Red Bolshevists to undermine us at home."[42]

## The Christian Front

Father Coughlin, the radio priest from Detroit, continued to draw support in poor Irish Catholic neighborhoods in Boston even as his star waned nationally due to increasingly strident anti-Semitism. When a Boston radio station announced in 1939 that it would no longer air Coughlin's "sermons," one thousand people met at Mechanics Hall to organize the Committee for Defense of American Constitutional Rights. The committee's three goals were to defend free speech, to protest "radio monopoly," and to demand government action against communism and "other un-American activities."[43] These Coughlinites saw the hand of communists behind the radio ban.

Three months later, in April 1939, seven thousand people returned to Mechanics Hall to hear Father Edward Lodge Curran, Coughlin's principle disciple, debate Granville Hicks, a Communist sympathizer and temporary

lecturer at Harvard University.[44] Curran was pastor and president of the International Catholic Truth society and editor of the largest Catholic weekly in the United States, the *Brooklyn Tablet*. The topic they debated was "Resolved, that Communism is the enemy of American democracy." Boston police sent 100 officers to keep order. Hicks tried to attack the Church by linking it to authoritarianism and Nazism. Curran fought back, taking his theme from William Z. Foster's quote "Religion is the opium of the people." Judging on the basis of crowd reaction, Curran won the debate handily. Throughout the evening, the crowd cheered Curran as loudly as it booed and hissed Hicks.[45]

Father Curran's visit laid the groundwork for Christian Front organizing. Indeed, Boston was one of only three cities where the Christian Front took root, the others being New York and Philadelphia. In the fall 1939, Boston's Front organizers held a series of meetings that ended with participants postering anti-Semitic stickers in Jewish neighborhoods.[46] In January 1940, the FBI's arrest of 18 men in Brooklyn, including several Christian Front members, temporarily halted organizing. Hoover was under pressure from President Roosevelt to investigate Nazi sympathizers.[47] Six months later, when a Brooklyn jury acquitted 14 and hung on the remaining defendants, Front organizing in Boston resumed.

A month after the Brooklyn trial ended, Rev. Ahern chose the topic "What is the Christian Front?" for his

weekly Sunday afternoon radio address on the Catholic Truth Hour. Cardinal O'Connell preapproved Ahern's remarks and published them in the *Pilot*. Ahern explained that groups of Catholics and Protestants organized the Christian Front to oppose "encroachments of Communism and other anti-Christian activities." While Catholics belonged to the Front, it was not affiliated with the Church, like the Holy Name Society or Knights of Columbus. "It is unfair," complained Ahern, "to blame the Catholic church for any mistakes the Christian Front may have made." After distancing the Church from the Front, Ahern concluded his address by attacking the government and press for singling out the group. "The real culprits were not the 17 men arrested but the instigators of the arrest."[48] On balance, Ahern treated the Front as a legitimate organization fighting communism. Since O'Connell approved all radio programming, he must have agreed with Ahern's assessment.

In June 1941, the Christian Front organized showings of the Nazi film, "Victory in the West," at the Hibernian Hall in Roxbury. The events were "jammed with frenzied pro-Fascism, hate-the-Jew sermons, and inflammatory speech making." The principal leader of the Front, Francis P. Moran, had helped organize the Committee For Defense of American Constitutional Rights in 1939 to protest the banning of Father Coughlin on the radio. In his speeches at Front meetings, Moran attacked both Roosevelt and Churchill. Roosevelt, he charged, plotted to establish a personal

dictatorship in Washington and put 1,500 "non-Christians" in the federal government.[49] Other Coughlinite offshoots, like the Social Justice Guild of Boston and Mothers Neutrality League, cosponsored Front events.

In early 1942, Coughlinites brought Father Curran back to Boston for several appearances. The most contentious occasion was Evacuation Day, a Boston holiday that commemorates the departure of the hated British troops in 1776. Nearly two centuries after the event occurred, Boston's Irish had appropriated this holiday as their own. It marked a defeat for the British Army, always a cause for celebration in the Irish community, and fell on the eve of Saint Patrick's day. By merging the symbolism of these two events, the Irish at once asserted their American patriotism and ethnic identity. By 1942, South Boston hosted the city's Evacuation Day ceremonies.

When the South Boston Citizens Committee invited Father Curran to be its principal speaker at the 166th anniversary of Evacuation Day, swift opposition developed. The controversy tapped into long-standing ethnic and class divisions. Liberals, Yankees and Jews saw Father Curran as a vicious anti-Semite who revelled in the defeat of the British army. They felt his vitriol particularly inappropriate when the United States was at war with Hitler and allied with England. Irish organizers of the event saw Father Curran as a spokesman for the Irish perspective.

A self-appointed committee tried to keep Curran out of South Boston. The Massachusetts CIO, a body dominated by Jewish labor leaders, and its member locals called on state politicians to boycott the ceremony; Donald Lothrup, pastor of the liberal Community Church, sent an urgent telegram to Mayor Maurice Tobin, conveniently vacationing in Florida during the controversy. On Saturday, the day before the event, opponents staged a vigil at City Hall while their representatives tried to contact city officials.[50] Organizers from South Boston dismissed these protests as the work of communists. William Gallagher, president of the Evacuation Day committee, told reporters objection to Father Curran was "tinged with pink, gradually deepening into red."[51]

When Father Curran arrived at South Boston High School, 5,000 people greeted him with thunderous applause. His first words, "I am here," said it all. At the beginning of his speech, he thanked Cardinal O'Connell for granting him "ecclesiastical permission" to come to Boston. Playing to long standing animosity between Boston's Irish and Yankees, he said "I don't care whether [my opponents] are common or episcopal bigots. I don't care whether anyone else in Boston likes me. You do and I'll come back again any time you want me to."[52] Curran spoke for 45 minutes, reviewing the history of Boston during the Revolutionary War in detail while never once addressing the war in Europe. In a very stirring end to his speech, Curran warned:[53]

> There are internal enemies in the United States of America today... The internal enemies are those who would repeal the Constitution, scrap the bill of rights, destroy freedom of speech and surrender America to worldwide atheistic revolution of Communism... [I]n the name of those who fought on Dorchester Hill, we want no totalitarian form of government in America. We want no Nazism and no Fascism and no Communism.

Although most politicians ducked the controversy because of "other commitments," South Boston's politicians appeared in force. Other speakers at the Evacuation Day ceremony included Boston School Committeeman Patrick Foley, Boston Public Welfare Commissioner William O'Hare, Acting Mayor and Ward 7 Councilor Thomas Linehan, Chief Marshal Patrick Gammon and Representative John E. Powers.

Some Irish Catholic leaders were appalled by Curran's politics and protested his appearance at the Evacuation Day ceremony. Frances Sweeney, president of the American-Irish Defense Association and outspoken Curran critic, joined the vigil outside City Hall the day before Curran's visit. She attend the Evacuation Day event, sitting at the press table. However, while the crowd waited for Curran to arrive, William Gallagher, president of the Evacuation Day committee, spotted Sweeney. Two men, one of whom wore a Legionnaire's uniform, confronted her and asked her to leave. When she refused, people in the front of the auditorium rose to their feet shouting "put her out." The two men picked her up off the floor and "escorted" her out of the hall. One reporter said "scores of women hissed and booed" as she was dragged down the center isle.[54]

As if to underscore the independence of the Irish community, the South Boston Citizens Committee invited Father Curran back again the following year. However, no public outcry developed in 1943, and local newspapers did not cover the event. At the beginning of his speech, Curran greeted "Christian Fronters" in the crowd thanking them for their faithful support. They included William Gallagher, president of the Evacuation Day committee, and Captain John Joseph Murphy. Originally from South Boston, Murphy had worked for Father Coughlin at his headquarters in Detroit. He led Christian Front and American First organizing in Boston, and published a newspaper titled "Save America Now: A Bulletin of Massachusetts."[55]

In his speech, Father Curran discussed the newest domestic peril--civilian defense. He warned the audience that it was "communistic" and must be stopped. Another speaker at the 1943 Evacuation Day commemoration was Rep. Hamilton Fish, a prominent Yankee who represented New York in Washington. Fish told the audience that it was an honor to speak from the "theatre of the great British defeat." He urged the audience to work with his organization, America First, to confront domestic dangers. With "the Japs and Nazis surrounded," the war in Europe was over. Americans needed to get back to the war at home, he warned, because "there is more to fear from our enemies within."[56]

Christian Front activities took place in the streets as well as on public platforms. In the fall of 1943, the Civil

Liberties Union of Massachusetts reported that, a "wave of anti-Semitism forced Boston into an unsavory position of leadership in national intolerance."[57] Until an October 1943 anti-Semitic incident brought national attention to Boston, local politicians, police and press ignored complaints from Jewish leaders about the rising tide of anti-Semitic violence. A gang of Irish street toughs jumped two Jewish boys, Jacob Hodas and Harvey Blaustein, and beat them badly. Police who arrived on the scene followed their standard procedures and sent the attackers away without taking names or making any arrests. When Jacob and Harvey protested, the police arrested them. At the Dorchester precinct, a police officer beat Harvey with a rubber hose while calling him "yellow Jew." A trial judge found Jacob and Harvey guilty of participating in an "affray" and fined each of them ten dollars.[58]

The *Christian Science Monitor*, the first Boston newspaper to cover the "anti-Semitic hooliganism," pointed the finger at the Christian Front and other Coughlinite groups. When other newspapers publicized allegations of complicity by the Boston police, Governor Saltonstall asked the state police to conduct an independent investigation of Boston police practices. The state police concluded that some Boston police officers beat Jewish suspects they stopped in the streets or brought to the precinct. Governor Saltonstall responded to the probe by firing Boston police commissioner Joseph Timility. The governor also appointed a

special task force to devise ways to confront neighborhood anti-Semitic violence.[59] The event symbolized Yankee-Irish relations. Irish Boston added Saltonstall's imperious act to the litany of abuses suffered at the hands of smug Yankee overlords. Yankee Boston renewed its vigilance over Irish excesses.

Street gangs and Boston police were not the only perpetrators of anti-Semitic acts during the war. Anti-Semites distributed vicious, anti-Jewish propaganda at war plants. In fall 1943, three workers at the Bethlehem Steel plant in Hingham passed out anti-Semitic leaflets on the shop floor. When another worker reported the incident to management and the FBI, he was laid off. A month later, anti-Semites posted flyers at their union's shop headquarters that said "Pay your dues and pay the Jews."[60] Similar anti-Semitic leafletting took place at the Fore River shipyard in Quincy.

## Conclusion

By looking at anticommunism on the local and state level in Massachusetts, we find a continuous thread of anticommunist activity during the war years. There were two strands to this thread. One came from people who found opposition to the war unpatriotic. Police and municipal authorities did what they could to shut down Communist party antiwar organizing. When the party switched sides and joined the war effort, attention shifted to conscientious

objectors. Small towns were unwilling to tolerate radicals who opposed the war on political principles.

The other strand of anticommunist activity originated in Catholic isolationism. The Church's position was a principled one that followed the neutrality of the Pope. The Church never argued with authoritarianism, but rather with persecution of Catholics. The Coughlinite position, however, quickly degenerated into bigoted anti-Semitism. Like many other gentiles in the United States, the Christian Front equated Jews with communists. An attack on a Jew was an attack on an internationalist world view that conservatives equated with communism.

## Notes

[1]John F. Stack, Jr. argues in his book, *International Conflict in an American City, Boston's Irish, Italians, and Jews, 1935-1944* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1979), that the extremism of the Coughlinite activities was the "climax" of ethnic conflict building since the late 1930s in reaction to international events. Stack emphasizes the anti-Semitic quality of "Coughlinites, the Christian Front and anti-Semitic hoodlums." The focus of Stack's book is ethnicity; his goal is to argue against assimilation. I have read the same sources from a different perspective and find in them evidence of a continuing thread of anticommunism. While Stack notes the anticommunist element of Coughlinite isolationism in passing, I see it as important as anti-Semitism. Indeed, the two are completely linked.

[2]M. J. Heale, *American Anticommunism, Combating the Enemy Within, 1830-1970* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1990), pp. 129-131; Ellen Schrecker, *The Age of McCarthyism, A Brief History With Documents* (Boston: Bedford Books of St. Martin's Press, 1994), pp. 15-16. In Schrecker's analysis, the point is implied rather than stated explicitly.

[3]*Equal Justice*, International Labor Defense, February 1940, Civil Liberties Union of Massachusetts Collection, Massachusetts Historical Society (hereinafter "CLUM"), Box 2, Folder "Equal Justice."

[4]Ibid.

[5]*Boston Globe*, November 8, 1939.

[6]*Equal Justice*, International Labor Defense, February 1940, CLUM, Box 2, Folder "Equal Justice."

[7]Minutes of Executive Committee Meeting, Civil Liberties Union of Massachusetts, April 11, 1940, CLUM, Box 2, Folder "CLUM Executive Committee Minutes, Jan-June, 1940."

[8]*Boston Globe*, May 13, 1940.

[9]Minutes of the Executive Committee, Civil Liberties Union of Massachusetts, April 29, 1941, CLUM, Box 3, Folder "CLUM Executive Committee minutes, Jan-Dec 1941."

[10]Undated Circular, CLUM, Box 3, Folder "Albert Sprague Coolidge, Correspondence, 1941."

[11]*Boston Globe*, May 13, 1941.

[12]*Boston Globe*, May 2, 1941.

[13]Statement of Mrs. LaRue Brown on behalf of the Massachusetts League of Women Voters, April 14, 1941, CLUM, Box 3, Folder "Legislation, Mass. and national, 1941."

[14]Massachusetts, House of Representatives, *House Journal*, May 12, 1941, p. 1150.

[15]American Civil Liberties Union, *In the Shadow of War: The Story of Civil Liberty, 1939-1940* (New York: ACLU, 1940), pp. 6, 45-50. *See also*, Mary Sperling McAuliffe, *Crisis on the Left, Cold War Politics and American Liberals, 1947-1954* (Amherst, Mass.: University of Massachusetts Press, 1978), pp. 88-90.

[16]M. Elizabeth Sanger to Roger M. Baldwin, October 15, 1946, CLUM, Box 6, Folder "CLUM General Correspondence, 1946."

[17]Henry W. Hamm to Alfred Sprague Coolidge, President, Civil Liberties Union of Massachusetts, April 21, 1942, CLUM, Box 4, Folder "CLUM Committees, Correspondence, 1942."

[18]Robert Justin Goldstein, *Political Repression in Modern America, From 1870 to the Present* (Cambridge, Mass.: Schenkman Publishing Co., 1978), p. 274.

[19]Carl Walz to Anne Paulsen, June 17, 1941, CLUM, Box 3, Folder "Legal Committee, 1941."

[20]Ibid.

[21]Ibid.

[22]*Greenfield Recorder-Gazette*, May 25, 1943.

[23]*Greenfield, Turner's Falls, Miller's Falls Directory* (Springfield, Mass.: H.A. Manning Co., 1940).

[24]Town of Montague, *Annual Report of the School Committee*, December 31, 1941, p. 9

[25]*Greenfield Recorder-Gazette*, May 26, 1943.

[26]*Greenfield Recorder-Gazette*, May 25, 1943.

[27]*Carl Walz v. Albert E. Clark*, Superior Court, Franklin County, No. 8461. Greenfield Recorder-Gazette, May 27, 1943.

[28]Leo P. Ribuffo, *The Old Christian Right: The Protestant Far Right from the Great Depression to the Cold War* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1983); Wayne S. Cole, *America First: The Battle against Intervention, 1940-41* (New York: Octagon Books, 1971).

[29]Bert Cochran, *Adlai Stevenson, Patrician Among the Politicians* (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1969), pp. 130-131.

[30]*Boston Globe*, May 1, 1941.

[31]*Boston Globe*, May 13, 1940.

[32]Stack, *International Conflict*, *passim*.

[33]Stack, *International Conflict*, p. 116.

[34]*The Pilot*, April 27, 1940.

[35]*Boston Globe*, June 13, 1940.

[36]*Boston Globe*, May 12, 1941.

[37]*Boston Globe*, May 13, 1941.

[38]*The Pilot*, March 9, August 17, 1940.

[39]*The Pilot*, January 27, 1940.

[40]*The Pilot*, March 15, 1941.

[41]*The Pilot*, May 25, 1940.

[42]*The Pilot*, December 20, 1941.

[43]*Boston Globe*, January 28, 1939.

[44]Granville Hicks was a literary critic. As a student at Harvard in the 1920s, he belonged to the Liberal Club, a fairly radical group given the time period. In 1932, Hicks signed a public document supporting Communist party candidates in the presidential election. His one year lectureship at Harvard in 1939-40 was his last academic job. In 1953, Hicks testified before the HUAC, naming names and describing Communist Party activities at Harvard. *See*, Ellen Schrecker, *No Ivory Tower, McCarthyism and the Universities* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), pp. 27, 31, 33, 194-95.

[45]*Boston Globe*, April 4 and 5, 1939.

[46]*Equal Justice*, International Labor Defense, February 1940, CLUM, Box 2, Folder "Equal Justice."

[47]Athan G. Theoharis and John Stuart Cox, *The Boss, J. Edgar Hoover and the Great American Inquisition* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1988), p. 149.

[48]*The Pilot*, July 6, 1940.

[49]Executive Committee Minutes, June 5, 1941, CLUM, Box 3, Folder "CLUM Executive Committee Minutes, Jan-Dec 1941;" Stack, *International Conflict*, p. 130.

[50]*Boston Globe*, March 15, 1942.

[51]*Boston Post*, March 17, 1942.

[52]*Boston Post*, March 16, 1942.

[53]*Boston Globe*, March 16, 1942.

[54]*Boston Globe*, March 16, 1942.

[55]*Boston City Reporter*, March 1943, CLUM, Box 5, Folder "CLUM Censorship 1943."

[56]*Ibid.*

[57]Civil Liberties Union of Massachusetts, *Annual Report, 1943-1944*, CLUM, Box 6, Folder "CLUM Annual Report, 1943-44."

[58]Stack, *International Conflict*, p. 137.

[59]Stack, *International Conflict*, p. 139.

[60]Elizabeth Sanger to Harland and Leticia Manchester, April 12, 1945, CLUM, Box 6, Folder "Are They Fooling You? Correspondence, 1945."

# CHAPTER 5

# UNION FRATRICIDE

In the midst of economic collapse and depression, the labor left challenged Roosevelt's Keynesian solution to the crisis. The Congress of Industrial Organizations led the critique. Its leadership and base was much broader than that of the American Federation of Labor which continued to organize only skilled craft workers. For a brief period, in the late 1930s and early 1940s, the CIO accommodated Marxists within its ranks. Labor moderates who advocated mediation from an enlarged federal state temporaily coexisted with Marxists who organized on the basis of class conflict. Thus, the two great labor federations purged communists a decade apart: the AFL in the late 1930s during the little Red Scare and the CIO in the late 1940s when it fully embraced Roosevelt's statist solution to labor's problems. By purging its left wing, the house of labor fully repudiated class struggle. Without a Marxist presence, moderate labor leaders were left alone to preside over the deradicalization of organized labor in the early postwar period.

To date, labor historians have posited three theories to explain the postwar rout of labor.[1] Ronald Schatz argues that changing demographic patterns brought younger, less skilled workers into plants who lacked the radicalizing experience of having organized CIO unions in the 1930s.[2]

Bert Cochrane posits a "historically contingent" model based on labor's class collaboration during the war.[3] Christopher Tomlins finds the answer in the CIO's wartime bureaucratization, growing reliance on the state, and demobilization of rank and file workers.[4] What is missing from these theories is anticommunism. In the cold war, anticommunism defined Americanism; it gave Americans common ground across class and ethnic boundaries. However, in order to embrace anticommunism, one had to renouce class struggle. Labor leaders joined the anticommunist crusade to further their immediate ends of gaining access to state power or to beat out a rival union. In the long run labor was irrevocably altered by cutting off its left wing and losing its source of militant union organizing and dynamic change. Anticommunism precipated an ideological shift to the right that voided class analysis.

The struggle within the labor movement over communist leadership provides an excellent window from which to identify sources of anticommunism on the state and local level and to see how rank and file members responded to their leadership's red baiting.

## AFL and its American Federation of Teachers

Samuel Gompers founded the American Federation of Labor in 1886 to promote "pure and simple unionism." He envisioned an alternative to radical unionism, safely removed from state repression, that concentrated on

organizing skilled workers. Since then, the AFL consistently rejected radicals and communists. Successive AFL presidents purged radical and communist leaders from locals of its affiliated unions. In 1938, AFL President William Green told delegates to the Massachusetts State Federation of Labor:[5]

> When we find [a communist], we don't try him, we just kick him out. There is no place in our movement for them... They can't live with us. We won't embrace their philosophy, nor will we allow them to shape our policies.

The following year, Massachusetts AFL delegates passed a resolution "continuing its opposition to nazism, fascism and communism."[6] At the same time, the AFL's national executive committee pressured affiliated unions, like the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), to clean house.

The AFT had a stormy relationship with the AFL since its inception.[7] The union originated in Chicago among working class elementary school teachers--mostly women--with family ties to the labor movement. Its union principles contrasted sharply with those of the larger and older National Education Association, a professional organization servicing school administrators. Initially, Gompers ignored AFT organizers' request for a charter because they advocated equal pay for women teachers while he promoted the family wage. Even after he relented in 1918, Gompers and other AFL leaders felt closer to the conservative NEA than to their affiliate, the AFT. In the early 1930s, AFT membership rolls swelled with younger,

militant WPA teachers. At the same time, a small group of leftist teachers gained control of the AFT executive board. Congressman Dies' House Committee on Un-American Activities as well as the AFL executive board, disapproved of this growing radical influence in the teacher's union.

In 1935, AFL president William Green pressured the AFT to purge its communists. He sent a telegram to the 1935 AFT convention telling delegates to oust Local 5 in New York City. Although many conservatives in the AFT agreed with Green, the teachers resisted being "dictated" to by the AFL. Green intensified the pressure. He cut off AFL funding for more union organizers and fired all women organizers. In September 1939, the AFL executive committee passed a resolution stating the AFT was run by communists and hinting that its charter would be revoked. That same month, the *Saturday Evening Post* ran an article exposing the AFT as a "Red" union. In 1940, Green told AFT Convention delegates to "put your house in order." Although the teachers booed Green for interfering in their affairs, they followed through. A year later, delegates voted overwhelmingly to revoke the charters of four locals in New York City and Philadelphia.

AFT organizing in Massachusetts followed a similar path. Women high school teachers in Boston and women elementary school teachers in Cambridge organized the first two AFT locals in Massachusetts. Shortly after receiving their charters, the Boston police struck. AFT organizers

decided not to hold any further organizing meetings because the strike had given all of labor a "black eye." They preferred to lay low until the furor over the police died down. In Lynn, the school committee chairman told the chief AFT organizer she would be fired from her teaching job unless she quit union organizing among school teachers.[8] Negative reaction to the police strike created a hostile antiunion climate throughout the state that thwarted these early efforts to organize a teacher's union.

The depression, however, created a different set of conditions that energized AFT organizing. Two powerful constituencies--business leaders and veterans--targeted education for draconian budget cuts. As the depression deepened, the business community pressed for reduction in taxes. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce's list of ten cost-cutting measures for municipal governments included larger classrooms, shorter school days, and reduced salaries. When businessmen targeted veterans' benefits, the powerful American Legion launched a counteroffensive against waste in education to draw attention away from their own budget demands.[9] The Legion coupled school fiscal issues with its attack on subversive teachers.

Some teachers responded to these attacks on education by embracing the AFT. Lawrence's Local 244, chartered in September 1932 to organize men teachers in the high school, signed up 21 men during the first month. From December 1932 to July 1933, the city of Lawrence did not pay its teachers.

According to Local 244's president, Walter A. Sidley, Lawrence faced "a crisis beyond that of any other city in New England excepting Fall River ... because Mayor White is in complete domination by the bankers and mill owners."[10] As the teachers went unpaid, membership in Local 244 doubled. By the spring of 1935, when the controversy over the teacher's oath erupted, Local 244's membership reached a high of 81 members. As Sidley spent more and more time on the teachers' oath battle and statewide AFT organizing, membership in Local 244 dropped off. By the time the U.S. entered World War II, seven dues-paying members remained.[11]

After taking on the fight against the teachers' oath, Sidley next turned to purging communists from the AFT in Massachusetts. Sidley was a cautious unionist. He embraced the AFT out of disgust with accommodationist policies of the NEA, a view shared by his constituents--underpaid male high school teachers. He described the union as a "national, non-strike organization of classroom teachers of constructive, professional policy."[12] Sidley had little tolerance for side issues promoted by popular front unionists. In 1937, he reported to the national office that his efforts to organize a local in Lynn had failed because "dissension over C.I.O. and 1936 Spanish Resolution have prevented any real functioning."[13] After the war ended, when Sidley tried to revive Local 244, he locked horns with Mary Cadigan, a dynamic elementary school teacher from

Boston who wanted the Lawrence local to include all teachers and to embrace the principle of equal pay.[14]

Communists led AFT locals in Boston and Cambridge. Forty Boston teachers chartered Local 441 in January 1936. After an initial period of disorganization, Local 441 regrouped under George Faxon's leadership and recruited a high of 100 members in 1940. Faxon, who taught at Roxbury high school, was first accused of being a communist in January 1939 when he served as faculty sponsor for the American Student Union (ASU). HUAC "exposed" the ASU as a communist front group in summer 1938. Faxon's Roxbury ASU meetings created a citywide fracas when the Boston School Committee launched a noisy investigation of "communistic subversion" in the public schools. Even though none was found, politicians, newspapermen and educators had a field day with the incident publicly linking Faxon to the Communist party.[15]

In 1940, with Faxon as president of Local 441, the union organized a "Yanks are Not Coming" committee and passed resolutions opposing U.S. intervention in the war and President Roosevelt's preparedness plans.[16] These actions followed the program of the Communist party during the period of the Hitler-Stalin pact. In 1939, Faxon replaced Walter Sidley as president of the Massachusetts State Branch of the AFT. With Sidley as president, the program for annual meetings included bread-and-butter topics such as "Should Teachers Join a Union," "A Real Tenure Law and How

to Get It," and "What Kind of Certification."[17] With Faxon as president, a political address by Mary Foley Grossman titled "School Security in a World Crisis" highlighted the annual meeting. Grossman, an AFT vice-president, led one of the locals expelled during the winter of 1940-41. The crisis she discussed was the growth of reactionary forces at home and abroad.[18] In 1940, with Faxon still president, the Massachusetts State Branch of the AFT passed a resolution condemning the maneuvering of Chicago Local 1 against the four locals under attack by the anticommunist national leadership.[19]

It is not clear from available evidence exactly how Sidley ousted Faxon and other suspected communists from the AFT in Massachusetts. He did, however, take credit for it.[20] In September 1943, Sidley and his allies elected Frances Masterson, an anticommunist loyal to the national executive board and a respected teacher, as president of the Massachusetts State Branch. When the AFL held its 1943 national convention in Boston, Masterson met with Irvin Kuenzli, secretary-treasurer of the AFT, and John D. Conners, a member of the AFL executive committee, to discuss "the problem of the Boston local." According to anticommunists, Faxon and his cohorts made Mary Cadigan, an Irish Catholic elementary school teacher, president of Local 441 as a "front" for the "small Stalinist group" that still controlled the local. It appears, however, that Cadigan used the communists, not the other way around. Nobody

controlled the feisty Cadigan who succeeded in forcing a split in the local between her supporters and Faxon's supporters.[21] In 1945, Cadigan maneuvered a vote dissolving Local 441 that ended any influence Faxon may still have had. She organized a new Boston local, controlled by women classroom teachers who built an effective grievance board to defend working conditions for members.[22]

The other AFT local of concern to Walter Sidley and anticommunists on the national executive board was at Harvard University. Chartered in 1935, Local 431 quickly recruited junior faculty members. Membership grew to 172 in October 1939, right before Hitler and Stalin sealed their pact, and declined steadily after that. When the local disbanded in 1950, its president reported that "the Union never served a genuine economic need of its members here... [T]he crusading spirits which used to join it now find ADA or the Progressive Party more suitable for their political purposes."[23]

In the late 1930s, the Communist party organized a clandestine unit within Local 431. Twenty years later, former communists in the unit testified before HUAC.[24] Young instructors and teaching assistants joined Local 431 and its Communist party caucus.[25] The AFT's national executive board intervened in Local 431's affairs in 1942 when the local invited Harry Bridges to speak at a meeting. The American Legion protested loudly, causing much publicity in Boston and in the national press. AFT President Fewkes

tried desperately to distance the national organization from any association with Bridges. At the next meeting of the executive board, the Indiana Council of Teachers Unions moved to revoke the Harvard charter. Although the ouster effort failed, the executive board passed a resolution rebuking Local 431 for causing injury to the AFT "because of unfavorable publicity."[26]

The purge of communists from the AFT in Massachusetts was less noisy and contentious than in New York City and Philadelphia. There were no trials, no national referenda and no convention expulsion votes. A much more organic process succeeded in the commonwealth. Local anticommunist AFT organizers, like Walter Sidley and Frances Masterson, worked behind the scenes to remove communists from statewide leadership positions. In the Boston local, a savvy unionist outmaneuvered communists. In other AFT locals, communists and progressives voluntarily quit to protest the purges. Carl Walz's local, in western Massachusetts, voted to withdraw from the AFT to protest lack of due process for ousted locals. Disgusted with the national executive board's leadership, they believed the union "failed signally, in a year of great, crucial issues before education and the nation, to face national problems..."[27]

In other locals, the issue of communist influence combined with others making teachers uneasy with the AFT. In New Bedford, after a highly successful initial organizing drive in 1933, members began dropping out in 1936 over the

"close relationship between the Teacher's Union and the Central Labor Union."[28] Even though many public school teachers came from working class families, they were not completely comfortable with unions. The NEA encouraged this attitude with its emphasis on "professionalism." Local 262's secretary in New Bedford told national headquarters: "The Union seems to be shaking down to those who believe in Union principles, and those who joined for personal advantages."[29] Two years later, she reported that "pressure and influence of certain clergy caused some of our best workers to drop out and deterred others from joining."[30] Public school teachers were neither working class nor professionals. Even in New Bedford, a strong union city, teachers shied away from building a union. Hints of communism scared them away completely.

## Congress of Industrial Organizations

Industrial workers were a different story, particularly those associated with the Congress of Industrial Organizations. The CIO grew out of the split in the AFL over whether to charter industrial unions. AFL president William Green and a majority of its executive board members represented an older model of craft unionism that excluded unskilled workers. The CIO championed a newer model of industrial unionism combining all workers on the shop floor, both skilled and unskilled, into one big unit.

John L. Lewis, president of the United Mine Workers of America, founded the CIO in 1935 after walking out of the AFL national convention to protest its refusal to charter industrial unions. It built militant unions during the depression organizing the unorganized and drawing workers away from the AFL in elections mandated by the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB). AFL president William Green fought back with vicious anticommunism. He blasted the CIO in the press, worked with the Dies committee to discredit CIO affiliates, and maneuvered to put anticommunists on the NLRB. Green claimed that Lewis led a movement directed by the Communist International, the worldwide grouping of communist parties controlled by the Soviet Union.[31]

Communists did dominate the leadership of several CIO unions. CIO president Lewis and his successor, Philip Murray, initially tolerated communists in their ranks because they were good, hard working organizers and the CIO needed all the help it could get. When Murray finally purged Communists from the CIO's affiliated unions in 1949, more than a decade after the AFL, he found rank and file members deeply divided over the issue.

Anticommunism became a defining issue among CIO union members in the late 1940s, but not without persistent intervention from "outside agitators." These outsiders included the Catholic Church, congressional committees, the FBI, the Truman administration, national media, and conservative politicians. Within the labor movement,

ambitious union officers used anticommunist rhetoric and red baiting as a tool to eliminate their left wing rivals. By and large, such maneuvers fell on deaf ears among rank and file workers who were more interested in their union's record for improving working conditions than they were in the political affiliation of their leaders. However, as the national drum roll against home-grown communists grew in the postwar period, the effectiveness of targeted union leaders diminished in the eyes of many rank and file members who were then willing to jettison communist leaders. Still, the purge was very contentious, for a sizeable minority of workers remained unmoved by the national anticommunist hysteria swirling about them.[32]

In Massachusetts, anticommunists targeted the left-led United Electrical, Radio & Machine Workers of America (UE).[33] From any of the interpretive paradigms of McCarthyism--pluralist, revisionist, or newer "long view"--one would expect to find working people very receptive to anticommunism. However, this is not what the evidence from the UE in Massachusetts shows. Contrary to what the literature predicts, anticommunism was not a compelling concern among rank and file union members until others made it so.

The only workers who fit the expected model were those closest to the Catholic culture of anticommunism. The 1949 UE purge came only when rival union officers tapped into all available resources--the Church, the press, the state, the

CIO--and convinced workers that their present union officials no longer represented their best interests. In other words, electrical and machine workers abandoned their union because they were afraid of losing jobs not because they were guarding national security. Even so, a sizeable minority of workers in the largest UE locals voted to retain their tainted union, and workers in the smaller locals remained loyal to the embattled UE.

## Catholic Trade Unionism

Two papal encyclicals, written to counteract Marxist doctrine at times when Catholic workers were drifting away from their church, defined the Church's theory of labor. Pope Leo XIII wrote *Rerum Novarum* in 1891 in response to modern industrialization. He argued against class conflict and for class harmony. This could be achieved, Leo XIII stated, if employers and workers respected each other's natural rights and lived up to their reciprocal duties. Employers must pay workers "just wages" in return for an honest day's work. Workers must respect private property and avoid violence. Leo XIII promoted labor guilds that brought labor and management under the same roof; he also endorsed conservative labor unions. Pope Pius XI's 1931 encyclical, *Quadragesimo Anno*, reiterated Leo's corportist approach to labor theory. In the midst of worldwide depression, Pius wrote that: "Sound prosperity is to be restored according to the true principles of a sane

corporative system which respects the proper hierarchic structure of society."[34] Both encyclicals were classic conservative texts. They constituted a vigorous attack on socialism and Marxism, but also included a critique of modern capitalism. This element of anticapitalism made Catholic labor doctrine relevant to workers in the 1930s and early 1940s.

Theologians in each Catholic country were left to apply papal authority to their own conditions. In the United States, Monsignor John A. Ryan of Catholic University in Washington, D.C., became the leading social theoretician. Ryan represented the moderate wing of the hierarchy. He managed to fit New Deal labor policy into the American corporate order.[35] One of Ryan's strongest critics within the church was Boston's Cardinal O'Connell.

Priests studied the encyclicals searching for a Catholic response to pressing social problems confronting working class parishioners. Father Coughlin claimed *Rerum Novarum* influenced his ideas more than any other religious text. Labor priests brought Catholic labor doctrine to the parish level. Some labor priests, such as Father Charles Owen Rice in Pittsburgh, marched on picket lines, spoke at union meetings and worked closely with influential labor leaders. Others ran labor schools, where workers learned Catholic labor theory and organizing skills. Some of these schools were organized on the diocesan level and some were the product of activist parish priests.[36]

Lay activists in the New York Catholic Worker movement were inspired by papal authority to organize the Association of Catholic Trade Unionists (ACTU) in 1937. ACTU members organized Catholic caucuses in labor unions. ACTU chapters soon opened in Detroit, Pittsburgh and Chicago. Although not officially sponsored by the Church, chaplains appointed by local bishops led ACTU chapters. Some local church authorities, like Boston's Cardinal O'Connell, thought ACTU too radical and hampered its development.

In the late 1930s, when these efforts were initiated, Catholic labor theory was committed to industrial unionism. It supported the right of workers to organize unions to fight for better working conditions. Catholic labor theory included a critique of capitalism as well as a denunciation of communism. It tried to steer a middle course between the two, sometimes referred to as the third path. By 1945, however, the Church dropped its critique of capitalism and focused exclusively on anticommunism. Before 1945, the Church fought communism in order to build "economic democracy"; after the war, the goal was simply to destroy communism.[37]

Rome signalled this change in Catholic labor theory in response to the growing power of Communist parties in Europe and the Soviet Union's attack on the Catholic Church in Eastern Europe.[38] In the U.S., the change led labor schools, labor priests, and ACTU to redouble their crusade against communist labor leaders in the CIO and its left-led

unions. For the UE, the cost was enormous. By 1955, a rival union, the staunchly anticommunist International Union of Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers (IUE), represented 60 percent of its members. Workers who remained in UE shops no longer had a union with authority to bargain on behalf of all workers in their industry.

Historians are still debating the importance of the Church's role in bringing down the UE and other left-led unions. Douglas Seaton, a historian of ACTU, concludes the Church played a "crucial role" in redirecting the labor movement in a conservative direction.[39] Neil Betten and Michael Harrington, however, argue that UE leaders overestimated the influence of ACTU. They found ACTU to be disorganized, often at loggerheads with the Catholic hierarchy, and argued its success came from alliances with other anticommunist elements.[40] Ronald Schatz, a recent historian of electrical workers at GE and Westinghouse, argues that the effectiveness of the Church depended on "a constellation of factors" including ethnic and religious background of union members, effectiveness of local leaders, and the "standing of anticommunist priests in the community."[41] Other historians, such as Harvey Levenstein and Ellen Schrecker, argue that the state was the crucial factor not the Catholic church.[42]

In Massachusetts, Catholic opposition to the UE was not a coordinated statewide effort but rather sprang from local initiatives led by union members and priests. St. Mary's

parish in Lynn ran an influential labor school where Catholic UE shop stewards and other unionists learned Church labor doctrine as well as how to run meetings using Roberts Rules of Order and debating techniques. Graduates of St. Mary's formed the nucleus of the rank and file Committee Against Communism which held meetings in the Knights of Columbus hall to plot the ouster of communist officers.

In Pittsfield, Father Eugene Marshall, pastor of St. Mary's parish, led a local crusade against the national UE leadership. Marshall's parish included the sprawling GE plant as well the homes of most of its workers. He spoke from the pulpit on several occasions denouncing national UE officers. In 1949 he told parishioners that an upcoming union election represented "a choice between Christ and Stalin." Marshall also sent letters to his parishioners urging them to attend critical union meetings.

In the Springfield-Holyoke area, Catholic union leaders from eight UE locals joined other UE dissidents to form a national anticommunist caucus within the UE called Members for Democratic Action. The objective of the caucus was to unseat national leaders. It opposed progressive resolutions from the floor of national conventions and ran slates of candidates. The Springfield anticommunists were active in the state CIO council and used that position as leverage against UE locals loyal to the national officers.

In 1950, Catholic anticommunists in Lynn, Pittsfield and Springfield brought their locals out of the left-led UE

and into the anticommunist IUE. In other Massachusetts cities, such as New Bedford and Boston, Catholic UE dissidents had less success. The Church played an important role in the factional fight between the UE and IUE. Without the Church, there would not have been much of a fight at all. However, the crucial factor among electrical and machine workers in Massachusetts was not whether their union leaders were communist but whether they were effective. The consequences of the UE's expulsion from the CIO was more important, to more UE members, than was the Church's denunciation of godless communists.

## United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America

Leaders from independent unions in the electrical appliance and radio industry founded the UE in 1936.[43] Young Jim Carey from Philadelphia led the radio workers. Carey worked as an inspector at the large Philco plant in West Philadelphia. In 1933, he and a group of other male inspectors at Philco organized a strike that forced the company to recognize their union. The unexpected success of the strike catapulted Carey into union leadership with no shop floor work experience. The Philco local affiliated with the AFL as a "Federal Labor Union," an undefined category for non-craft unions, and the AFL hired Carey to organize the radio and home appliance industry. For the next two years, Carey travelled throughout the Northeast organizing unions in small shops. When the AFL refused to

grant Carey a charter for a new industrial union of electrical workers, he approached independent union leaders in heavy current plants to discuss a merger.

UE's early leaders--who were skilled, high wage, radical workers--organized their industrial union on very democratic principles that emphasized local autonomy much more than other CIO unions, such as the United Auto Workers or United Mine Workers. The UE constitution decentralized power in eleven districts that elected their own officers and collected per capita dues directly from their locals. It kept the number of staff members who could serve as delegates to national conventions low and restricted salaries of officers to the highest wage paid a worker in the industry. When UE anticommunists set about to purge communists, they knew it would have to be done from the bottom up, local by local, because of UE's twin traditions of democracy and localism.

Delegates to the UE's founding convention elected 25 year old Jim Carey as their president. Carey grew up in a middle class, Irish Catholic family of Al Smith Democrats. He knew Catholic labor doctrine having studied the papal encyclicals *Rerum Novarum* and *Quadragesimo Anno*. During the Philco strike and his early organizing days, Carey relied heavily on the advice of more experienced, anticommunist, Socialist labor leaders in Philadelphia. Although Carey's background was strongly anticommunist, in the popular front era, he worked side-by-side with radical UE leaders.

Julius Emspak, the UE's secretary-treasurer, grew up in a socialist household in Schnectady, New York. He learned union organizing from John Turnbull, an English-born socialist who founded the big GE local in Schenectady. Emspak attended Union College on a GE scholarship and graduate school at Brown University. He quit graduate school in the early 1930s to return to union organizing at the GE plant.

Jim Matles, UE's director of organization, emigrated from Rumania with his family in 1929 at the age of 19. They settled in Brooklyn where he worked in the metal trades as a union organizer. He probably joined the Communist party during this time. In 1935, Matles initiated negotiations to bring the Brooklyn locals into the AFL's International Association of Metalworkers (IAM). In order to do this, he down played his own radical politics. When the UE was organized, Matles quickly abandoned the IAM and brought the Brooklyn metal workers into the UE, a union where he felt much more at home.

Carey, Emspak and Matles ran the UE in the late 1930s. In 1938, Carey became Secretary-Treasurer of the CIO as well as president of the UE. Most commentators argue that John Lewis brought Carey into the CIO to appease its anticommunist right wing. Whatever Lewis's motivation may have been, Carey posed no threat to his autocratic control of the CIO. Commentators agree that Carey was ambitious and enjoyed the limelight. In 1937, for example, while the

union's GE Conference Board negotiated with the biggest employer in the industry, Carey grabbed headlines by holding a press conference and disclosing the content of closed door negotiations. The Conference Board, controlled by the big Lynn and Schenectady GE locals, scolded Carey for "popping off" to the press and barred him--their president--from further negotiations.[44] By 1940, Carey was frequenting Eleanor Roosevelt's salon in the White House, where he kept her abreast of activities in the labor movement. Ronald Schatz describes Carey as "personable" while Harvey Levenstein calls him "cocky." Carey's contemporaries probably reacted to him in a similar way. Some tried to grab onto his coattails and some wanted to strangle him.

Carey spent most of his time in Washington attending functions, rubbing elbows and lobbying legislators while Matles and Emspak ran the UE. During the popular front era, Carey co-existed with Matles and Emspak. In 1938, when HUAC attacked the UE, Carey, Matles and Emspak mounted a joint, vigorous defense of the union, denying communist influence and demanding the information on which Chairman Martin Dies based his charges. A HUAC dissenter revealed the committee's two sources: John Frey, a member of the AFL's Executive Committee, and Joe Zack, a former communist turned informant. Carey sent a circular to all UE members denouncing HUAC and its information.[45]

Although Carey had differences with Emspak and Matles, he continued to work with them until the 1940 UE annual

convention. In July, two months before the convention, Carey endorsed Franklin D. Roosevelt for president allying himself with other CIO liberals who supported Roosevelt's preparedness plans. *UE News*, the union's newspaper advocated neutrality as did the Communist party during the period of the Hitler-Stalin pact. However, since CIO President John Lewis and most rank and file members also supported neutrality, it did not divide Carey from Emspak and Matles.

Communist membership in the union became the dividing issue. In 1941, a conservative New Jersey local wrote Carey asking if it could pass a rule prohibiting communists, nazis and fascists from membership. In his column in *UE News*, Carey said that they could. At the next meeting of the General Executive Board, Emspak vigorously opposed Carey's position. After a heated debate, Emspak's motion carried.[46]

Carey later recalled that he "fell into the position of being something of a quarterback against the communists - a quarterback in the effort to throw the communists out of the CIO."[47] At this point, Carey irrevocably split with Emspak and Matles by going on the offensive against communists in the labor movement. In summer 1941, after Hitler invaded the Soviet Union, the *UE News* flipped back to supporting Roosevelt and war preparedness. Again, Carey used his column to blast the left wing of his union. "Political acrobats in pink tights posing as labor leaders are a

disgrace to the union and insult the intelligence of the membership."[48]

Delegates at the 1941 convention defeated Carey's reelection bid for president by a vote of 635 (54 percent) to 539 (46 percent). Albert Fitzgerald, a respected member of Local 201 at the big GE plant in Lynn, won. Fitzgerald had been elected steward, treasurer and president of the local. In 1940, he joined the GE Conference Board as District Council 2's representative. Like Carey, Fitzgerald was an Irish Catholic from an anticommunist background, and a registered Republican who was considered a moderate. Fitzgerald, however, was willing to work with Emspak and Matles, and for this his detractors called him a communist stooge. Father Marshall of Pittsfield warned parishioners that Fitzgerald "has a fine name that might disarm anyone, but he's as Red as the flag of Russia."[49]

Carey claimed he lost the 1941 election solely because of the "communist issue," and spent the next ten years trying to regain his position. At first, he opposed raiding UE locals and worked from within the union. His sole strategy was red-baiting. In August 1946, he joined forces with ACTU, socialists, and other anticommunists in the union to form the UE-Members for Democratic Action (MDA).[50] One commentator places CIO President Philip Murray at the meeting as well.[51] Anticommunism united this coalition. In 1948, Carey told a Congressional investigating committee that the group aimed to remove all present UE officers,

members of the executive board, editors of the *UE News*, office staff and national organizers.[52] The group's "statement of purpose" declared that UE members had a choice between "returning the UE to the ranks of respectable CIO unions with sound union objectives or allowing the UE to hurry along to its own destruction as a front for the American Communist Party and its program."[53] In keeping with these principles, the MDA condemned the UE's contributions to the Civil Rights Congress and Southern Conference for Human Welfare, groups they described as "known Communist front organizations."

Harry Block told the press that UE members were "overwhelmingly non-Communist."[54] He was right. Yet delegates at the 1946 annual convention resoundingly defeated MDA's first slate of anticommunist candidates by margins of 75 percent and 85 percent. The delegates defeated another MDA resolution, offered by Frank Hall, business agent at Local 206 in Springfield, Massachusetts, that would have barred communists from holding union office.[55] Such actions show that UE delegates were more concerned with the record of their leadership than they were with their politics.

MDA members tried without success to get UE's District Council 2--the New England district that included Massachusetts--to take anticommunist positions. In 1946, Frank Hall introduced his resolution barring communists from membership at the District Council 2 meeting after it had

been defeated at the national convention. UE President Albert Fitzgerald attended the meeting to argue against it. Delegates soundly defeated the resolution.[56]

Carey and his allies, however, were determined to make the politics of UE leaders a dividing line issue among members. Two months after the 1946 convention, Carey sent the *UE News* a letter stating: "The issue between me and the present UE leadership goes solely to the proposition that our great International Union has become known as a transmission belt for the American Communist Party."[57]

Carey had plenty of help red baiting the UE leadership. ACTU brought to MDA a network of identified anticommunist union members, many of whom held office in their locals. Labor priests advised local "Actists"--the term ACTU members used to describe themselves--while Catholic labor schools trained anticommunist UE members in parliamentary procedure and debating skills. Catholic labor doctrine provided the ideological rationale for purging communists from the labor movement.

After the war, the CIO came under increasing national pressure to "clean house." In February 1947, the *Saturday Evening Post* ran a two-part expose by conservative columnists Joseph and Stewart Alsop on Reds in the CIO.[58] The UE was one of the featured unions. The Alsops claimed that 25 percent of all CIO members belonged to unions controlled by communists, using the UE to explain how communists seize control of unions. According to the

article, after Carey "built the electrical workers union up into one of the strongest in the CIO," he was double-crossed by communists and lost the presidency in a "close, bitter election." Communists got power, according to the Alsops, because they forsook everything for the union and worked harder than anyone else. They recruited "dupes" by preying on bored assembly line workers and helped them get elected to local union offices. Once elected, the "dupes" were manipulated by communists to do their bidding. The article had all the markings of a planted FBI story.

The UE had been a target of congressional investigating committees since Congressman Dies chaired HUAC. After the war, a conservative Congress redoubled pressure on the UE to "clean house." Anticommunist MDA members worked closely with these committees to discredit UE leadership and to further their own position. In 1947, three months before holding hearings on communism in Hollywood, HUAC investigated communism in the UE. Four anticommunist local UE leaders testified. Two, Joseph Julianelle and Michael Berescik, led Local 203 in Bridgeport, Connecticut. When they testified before HUAC, they were in the midst of a power struggle with the left wing of their local. Testifying before HUAC was part of their strategy to eliminate their opposition and gain control of the local. Julianelle and Berescik led the MDA movement in UE District Council 2.[59]

In July 1947, District Council 2 debated a strongly worded resolution condemning MDA and its red baiting activities. Julianelle and Berechik defended MDA at the meeting, affirming that MDA "is committed to one thing, and that is to work against the influence of Communism in the UE." Brother Hannigan, a member of Local 202 in Springfield, condemned MDA, saying he never heard MDA people talk about working conditions of people the union represents. Although MDA people called themselves "a movement to save the people, really it is a movement to crack the union wide open and put it in the hands of the employers."[60] The District Council 2 resolution condemning MDA passed "overwhelmingly."

In 1948, Carey led off hearings to investigate communist infiltration of the UE conducted by the House Special Subcommittee of the Committee on Education and Labor. Carey told the committee about the formation of the MDA and its anticommunist mission. He attacked UE leaders claiming they harassed MDA members. He also made the bizarre argument that employers favored communists as UE stewards because they could not process grievances as aggressively as anticommunist stewards.[61] Carey also encouraged Senator Hubert Humphrey to investigate communists in defense industry plants and sponsor legislation forcing defense contractors to withdraw contracts with the UE.[62]

Congressional committees worked closely with UE anticommunists throughout the late 1940s and 1950s. They

scheduled hearings on the eve of important union elections to give anticommunists a boost in the local press; subpoenaed local UE leaders to appear in Washington, taking them out of the community just before crucial elections; and held hearings in local communities creating a circus-like atmosphere of charges and countercharges in the press that coincided with UE contract negotiations or strike settlement talks.[63]

Congressional action was the most visible attack on the UE by the federal government, but not the only. The Industrial Employee Review Board investigated dozens of GE and Westinghouse workers it considered "poor security risks." Often their worst crime was opposing anticommunist candidates for local UE leadership positions. The Atomic Energy Commission ordered GE to withdraw recognition of the UE at an atomic power laboratory.[64] Carey used these actions to scare UE members into thinking they would lose their jobs unless all communists were purged from the union.

The Taft-Hartley non-Communist affidavits was another powerful weapon Carey and his MDA allies used to drive a wedge between UE rank and file and their leaders. The Taft-Hartley Act, passed in 1947 over President Truman's veto, mandated all union officers to file affidavits certifying they were not members of the Communist party and did not support any organization that advocated the overthrow of the government by any illegal means. The law barred union officers who did not file affidavits from participating in

National Labor Relations Board elections. At first, CIO unions united in opposition to this and other antiunion provisions of the Taft-Hartley Act. Their unity cracked when AFL unions, whose officers filed affidavits and could run in NLRB elections, began raiding CIO unions. The UE and other left-led unions were the last to sign the affidavits. For UE and CIO leaders, not signing the affidavits was a question of principle and union solidarity; for Carey, it was another tactic to win over rank and file workers.

The CIO gave Carey and his MDA allies their most important boost. Even with all the outside interference from the state, Carey still could not recapture the UE presidency with the sole strategy of red baiting. At the September 1949 UE convention, he did not even bother to run because he knew he did not have enough votes to win. The MDA candidate, Fred Kelly from Local 201 in Lynn, lost to the incumbent president, Albert Fitzgerald, by a vote of 2335 (61 percent) to 1500 (39 percent). Carey did not become president of a union until 1950, when the CIO purged the UE and chartered a new union, the IUE. His strategy of having workers decide between a communist-led UE and anticommunist-led UE failed. When the choice changed to the unaffiliated UE and the IUE-CIO, he succeeded.

The CIO purged the UE and other left-led unions over political issues, not labor issues. The CIO and UE differed on two policy issues: the Marshall Plan and Henry Wallace's third party candidacy. Secretary of State George C.

Marshall made a personal appeal for CIO support of his foreign policy agenda at its 1947 annual convention held in Boston. Marshall was the first secretary of state to ever address organized labor. Because international leaders studied Marshall's every word, he read from a carefully worded prepared text. George Baldanzi, the dynamic president of the Textile Workers Union, had no such limitation. Speaking from the floor in support of the Marshall Plan, he drew on delegates' heartstrings. As part of a labor delegation that toured Europe, Baldanzi personally witnessed the devastating hunger and need which he described to the convention. "[I saw] mothers and fathers like you and I. Our ancestors came from Europe. We are part of them." He urged delegates to support the Marshall Plan in order to prevent a communist takeover of Europe.[65]

Delegates also heard Boston's new Archbishop, Richard Cushing. Cushing's style was vastly different from that of his predecessor, Cardinal O'Connell. Cushing opened his remarks by noting the connections between the Church and labor, ranging from Jesus the worker to the American hierarchy, all sons of working men. After giving the American labor movement a hearty endorsement, Cushing reminded CIO delegates that "everyone knows there are potential traitors to America in our organizations in the labor movement." The solution rested with them, he argued. "American Labor can solve the problem itself in an American

way within the framework of American Law and in the best interests of the American people."[66]

The CIO convention endorsed the Marshall Plan and Truman's bid for re-election in 1948. In January 1948, CIO President Philip Murray called on all working Americans to support their legislative program.[67] This sent a message to the UE and other left-led unions that they must toe the line on the Marshall Plan and Truman's re-election. Murray and other labor leaders favored Truman over Henry Wallace, the Progressive Party candidate. Because of Congress's ugly, antilabor mood, they desperately needed to keep a Democrat in the White House. Wallace stood little chance of being elected and would only take votes away from Truman. They charged that communists supported Wallace because they wanted to defeat Truman, leaving the country without a moderating force on the national level and thus create conditions ripe for revolution. Joseph Salerno, president of the Massachusetts CIO Council, charged that "The third party movement of Wallace will accomplish nothing else but assure the election of a reactionary President and national administration."[68]

These issues were very important to CIO president Murray. The postwar strike wave unleashed a forceful, conservative backlash against labor on the federal and state level. The Taft-Hartley Act promised to roll back labor's New Deal gains and to strip it of power necessary to confront management on a equal footing. In Massachusetts,

the state legislature debated three antilabor bills introduced in 1947 and 1948 by the Massachusetts Chamber of Commerce. One made it illegal to exclude workers from employment for failing to join the union; another required all votes for union officers to be taken by secret ballot; and the third required strike votes to be taken by secret ballot in an election overseen by the NLRB. The legislature soundly defeated all three measures. Their proponents, however, put them on the ballot as referenda. State organizations of the CIO, the AFL and Americans for Democratic Action (ADA), joined forces to fight the antilabor bills.[69] In November 1948, Massachusetts voters defeated the measures by a vote of two to one.[70]

Murray tolerated communists and radicals in the CIO because he needed them and respected their organizing work. By 1948, however, with so many powerful anticommunist enemies in Congress, and with a growing anticommunist right wing within the CIO itself, the UE and other left-led unions became too much of a liability for Murray. He acted by omission. That is, he failed to stop Walter Reuther's strongly anticommunist United Auto Workers (UAW) from raiding UE locals. When the UE boycotted the 1949 CIO convention to protest UAW raiding, Murray did nothing to stop the anticommunists, led by Jim Carey, from expelling the UE. Carey also pushed through a resolution passed declaring: "UERMWA has been selected by the Communist Party as its labor base from which it can operate to betray the

economic, political, and social welfare of the CIO, its affiliates and members... We can no longer tolerate within the family of the CIO the Communist Party masquerading as a labor union."[71]

Thus began an internecine battle between the unaffiliated UE and Carey's CIO-sponsored IUE that reached into every local. Because Carey's sole message was anticommunism, it forced all rank and file members to take a position on the red scare. At the time, there were 36 UE locals in Massachusetts representing approximately 44,000 workers. Over half of all UE members in Massachusetts belonged to one of two locals: Local 201 at the GE plants in Lynn and Everett and Local 255 at the Pittsfield GE plant. In June 1950, after a bloody campaign, both locals voted to affiliate with the IUE. Table 5.1 shows the tallies.

Given the national and international context of these elections, the UE did remarkably well in Lynn and

Table 5.1 NLRB election results from largest UE locals in Massachusetts, June 1950

| | Number of Voters | IUE | UE |
|---|---|---|---|
| Local 201 (Lynn) | | | |
| River Works/Everett | 11,523 | 52% | 45% |
| West Lynn | 3,022 | 61% | 35% |
| Local 255 (Pittsfield) | | | |
| Production/ Maintenance | 6,194 | 70% | 29% |

Source: *Lynn Telegram News*, May 26, 1950; *Berkshire Evening Eagle*, May 25, 1950.

Pittsfield. Including data for all UE locals in the state, the results are even more astonishing. In spite of the onslaught of anticommunist propaganda, more than half of the locals stayed with the UE after it was expelled from the CIO. The smaller the local, the more likely it was to stay in the UE. Table 5.2 shows this breakdown.

Table 5.2 Affiliation of UE locals in Massachusetts, by size, 1952

| Number of members | IUE | UE |
|---|---|---|
| Less than 100 | 1 | 7 |
| 100 - 500 | 3 | 9 |
| 500 - 1000 | 5 | 2 |
| 1000 - 2000 | 3 | 1 |
| 2000 - 3000 | 1 | 1 |
| More than 3000 | 2 | 0 |

An enormous amount of resources went into winning over UE locals to the IUE. The CIO contributed $800,000 to the 1950 election campaign; the Steelworkers gave $200,000. The UAW stopped raiding UE locals. The CIO hired scores of organizers for the IUE, many of whom were former MDA members. These resources were concentrated on winning over the largest UE locals that would bring the largest number of workers into the IUE. Backed by this formidable array of money and manpower, Carey finally convinced workers to abandon the UE.

How then, did these national events play out on the local level? In order to understand how Carey and his MDA

allies convinced workers to turn against the UE, we need to look at what happened inside the locals. First we will consider the two biggest locals, 201 in Lynn and 255 in Pittsfield, and then the grouping of locals in Springfield, most of which voted to affiliate with the IUE.

## Local 201, Lynn

Local 201 represented workers in GE's large heavy current plants in Lynn and West Lynn, known as the River Works plant, and in neighboring Everett. By 1940, the River Works complex was the largest work site in Massachusetts. The Everett plant manufactured superchargers and was much smaller than the other site. Local 201 was the largest UE local in Massachusetts and in District Council 2, and the third largest local in the UE. Its vote carried great weight at national conventions.

GE workers in Lynn began meeting in August 1933 to organize a union. Alfred Coulthard, a skilled patternmaker, led the effort. Coulthard was a socialist who emigrated from England in 1920 and quickly found employment at the GE plant in Lynn. He worked with the Socialist party and the Patternmakers League of North America, a craft union affiliated with the AFL that survived at GE in the 1920s. When the depression hit, Coulthard was one of the most highly paid employees in the Lynn patternmaking shop. In 1932, GE laid off Coulthard for six months, rehired him at a reduced rate of pay, and then laid him off again. When

management ignored the grievance he filed with the company union, he quit and turned to organizing.[72]

Coulthard and other union activists spent a year organizing the plant and fighting for recognition from GE. In 1934, the Lynn group became the first independent union to bargain with GE. In 1936, Lynn's big independent union joined forces with Carey's Federal Labor Union to found the UE. At its inaugural convention, delegates wanted Coulthard to serve as secretary-treasurer, but he declined because he wanted to spend his time organizing Local 201. Julius Emspak became UE's embattled secretary-treasurer.[73]

Instructors at a Catholic labor school run by St. Mary's parish, Lynn's biggest Catholic church, first introduced anticommunism as an issue in Local 201's affairs. The Boston Archdiocese organized the labor school in 1941 when it decided to expand its labor school program into industrial cities surrounding Boston. Lynn was the only city where a new labor school took root.

The Boston labor school program grew out of unsuccessful efforts to organize an ACTU chapter. Cardinal O'Connell never approved of ACTU or its Boston sponsor, the Catholic Worker movement.[74] He gave them no monetary support while retaining absolute control over their affairs.[75] In 1939, the small Boston ACTU group decided not to associate with the national ACTU organization because they were "not so well organized or so stabilized to be in a position to take an active part in a national

organization."[76] The Archdiocese responded by organizing its own Catholic Labor Guild and by instituting a series of labor school classes.

Organizers within the Archdiocese planned the labor school as an antidote to communist run labor schools that attracted Boston workers in the popular front era. The school met one night a week, for three to four months. At first, organizers only recruited AFL unionists but, as enrollment decreased in 1939-40, they also admitted CIO unionists and women. Enrollment peaked at 70 students in 1940. At the Boston school, students listened to lectures on Catholic labor doctrine, labor law and labor legislation.[77]

The first session of the Lynn labor school opened somewhat tentatively in November 1942. Rev. John J. Downey, a new schoolmaster appointed by Cardinal O'Connell in early 1943, brought new energy to the program. Classes in Lynn met on Sunday nights and were taught by three men: Downey, Augustus Keane, a high school teacher, and William Macksey, a "well known labor leader." The Lynn school taught ethics and Catholic labor doctrine as well as more practical subjects like public speaking and parliamentary procedure.[78]

Lynn's Catholic workers and union leaders welcomed the labor school. They endorsed the school's principal message of labor-management cooperation and anticommunism. In June 1943, the school held a gala banquet to mark the closing of its second session. Organized by Local 201 stewards, 150

supporters attended the banquet. People who could not attend listened to the speeches on the local radio station. Father William J. Smith, a Jesuit, New York ACTU organizer, and founder of the Crown Heights labor school in Brooklyn gave the main speech. He exhorted the audience to "build a labor movement that is absolutely free of the spirit of class conflict" and will fight against "sinister Communistic influences."[79]

Local 201 leadership took a dim view of Father Smith and St. Mary's labor school. It reported to UE national officers that Fathers Smith and Downey made a "virulent" attack on the leadership of Local 201, accusing the executive board of being "90% communistic" and incompetent in handling grievances. According to the local, the public attack from the labor school "coincides with a current disruptive campaign of a group of [stewards] and members, mainly from building 64, River Works, in the membership meetings."[80]

At the opening banquet of the labor school's third session in October 1943, 500 people showed up to hear guest speaker Father William J. Kelly, a member of the New York Labor Relations Board. In the late 1930s, Kelly served as ACTU chaplain, mediated labor disputes for the New York chapter, and taught at ACTU's labor school in Brooklyn. Leo Barber, president of Lynn's Central Labor Union and St. Mary's Labor Association, served as toastmaster at the banquet. Kelly focused primarily on Catholic labor

doctrine, particularly Leo XIII's *Rerum Novarum* that stressed labor-management cooperation. Lynn Mayor Arthur Frawley echoed the call for industrial peace, arguing that there would be no need for strikes or lockouts if employer and employee followed the teachings of Pope Leo XIII.[81]

St. Mary's labor school disbanded, probably in the summer of 1944, when the Boston Archdiocese withdrew its support due to policy changes in the Chancery made by its new Archbishop, Richard Cushing. Father John J. Ryan, the priest in the Chancery who supervised the Church's labor activities, told Cushing that the Church's "normal and traditional means of pulpit and press" reached far more workers than the labor schools and was a more effective method of teaching Catholic social doctrine. In Church, he argued, "we have them under ideal conditions, namely, under the formality of Catholics, with workers, organized and unorganized, as well as managers and employers, in the same capacity."[82]

The closing of St. Mary's labor school illustrates the often ambiguous role of the Catholic church in fighting communism. On the one hand, the school was effective in organizing Catholic stewards and rank and file members to challenge the left-leaning leadership of the local. Its banquets brought Catholics together across class lines to oppose communism in the labor movement. The Archdiocese, on the other hand, seemed uninterested in building an organization to battle communists for control of union

locals. Church leadership required absolute control of its projects. St. Mary's labor school was too messy and too remote from Boston for that kind of control. Father Downey reported to the Chancery that the school's 45 students included "one communist, one very pink Jewish female lawyer, and three non-Catholics."[83] The Church hierarchy wanted to fight communism on its terms.

After St. Mary's labor school closed, the next organized effort to combat communism in Local 201 surfaced in March 1947 when a group of GE workers met at the Knights of Columbus Hall to form the Committee Against Communism. Archie Shields, a spokesperson for the committee told the press that:[84]

> The purpose of this committee is to prevent a communist from holding any elective office or appointive position in our local. It is a known fact that we have them in our local, and in responsible positions at that. It is felt, that with all the criticism being made against us, that we should clean up our own house... It is quite possible that the results of this committee could set a pattern that would be followed throughout the nation, local by local... [The situation] demands that the spotlight be brought to bear on those who seek to undermine our way of life.

Shields reported that many UE shop stewards attended the meeting, but none of the officers participated. He announced that the committee would hold its next meeting at Local 201's headquarters and invited the press to attend.

The origins of this committee are not clear. Some organizers were Catholics with close enough ties to the Knights of Columbus to use their hall. They may have

participated in the St. Mary's labor school a few years earlier. The goals of the committee are identical to those of MDA, the Carey-ACTU alliance formed in the summer of 1946 to oust the national leadership. Perhaps Shields or some other committee members attended MDA meetings. The Lynn anticommunists chose to use a different name, which suggests that if there was a direct connection, they did not want to reveal it.

Shields's use of the media was clever and calculated. It is doubtful he had permission to hold the committee's next meeting in Local 201's union hall. By inviting the press, he guaranteed coverage if the local officers denied them use of the space. Shields's reference to "all the criticism being made against us" shows the impact of the Alsop brothers anticommunist article in *The Saturday Evening Post*. Local 201 figures prominently in the article because UE president Albert Fitzgerald came from the Lynn local. Shields relied on the unfavorable national publicity to generate local interest in the committee.

Local politicians also generated negative publicity about the danger of communists in the labor movement. Representative Kendall Sanderson from Marblehead, a wealthy seaside resort town, neighboring working class, industrial Lynn, worked with the Chamber of Commerce and other conservatives to promote antilabor legislation. Sanderson claimed that the goal of his bills was to "rid unions of Communist domination."[85] In March 1947, shortly after the

formation of Shields's Committee Against Communism, Sanderson held hearings in Boston to investigate a Local 201 strike vote taken in January 1946. At the hearing, Sanderson questioned labor representatives about the Committee Against Communism. Sanderson knew about the anticommunist committee from Reverend Wilcox, the minister of Lynn's Unitarian-Universalist Church who was leading a local crusade against the UE.[86] Wilcox reported to the Lynn Kiwanis Club that Local 201 was "Communist dominated."[87]

Shields told the press that Local 201's business agent, Fred Kelly, knew about the formation of the committee but had nothing to do with it. Kelly represented local UE officers who initially opposed the anticommunist MDA as being divisive to the labor movement, but jumped ship before 1949 when they saw how red baiting could advance their career. Kelly never worked in a factory in the electrical industry. While attending a local business school, he worked as an usher in a local theatre and as a clerk in a local grocery store. His father belonged to Local 201's executive board in the late 1930s. When Kelly graduated from business school, his father got him a job as a clerk in the local's office where he kept the books and supervised distribution of the local's newspaper. Kelly began working closely with Al Coulthard, one of Local 201's founders and its business agent, and took the title of "Assistant to the Business Agent." Kelly became a member of Local 201 when the membership revised its by-laws permitting office staff

to join the union. As a member of Local 201, he ran for the office of "Assistant Business Agent." After serving a stint in the Army during the war, he returned to Lynn and ran for Coulthard's position as business agent when Coulthard left Lynn to serve on the Massachusetts State Labor Commission. As Local 201's business agent, Kelly sat on the national GE Negotiating Committee where he failed to distinguish himself.[88]

In July 1947, when District Council 2 debated a resolution condemning MDA and its tactics, Kelly spoke out strongly against anticommunists active in his local.[89]

> I despise this stuff and have seen too much of it... I want the respect of [MDA] people in my Local, but I won't join them in a trade union hall. We should fight for the principles for which the trade union was formed. In the past six months this group has spent time, energy, and somebody's money to fight Communism, while we got the Taft-Hartley Law.

Kelly also blasted James Carey, MDA's figurehead, for lacking interest in rank and file members. "For the past ten years Carey wouldn't come to any union meeting, but let a group of manufacturers come to town, and he attends."[90]

Sometime in the next year or so, Fred Kelly had a conversion. By November 1948, he was working with anticommunists in Local 201 to embarrass national officers and drive a wedge between them and rank and file members. By June 1949, Kelly had become MDA's choice to stand in for Carey and run against Fitzgerald for president of the union. When he accepted the nomination, he promised to "clean

house" of "left wing pinkos" and "undesirable like Communists."[91] Kelly's conversion was part of Carey's calculated strategy. Carey had to win the support of big locals in order to regain control of the UE. Perhaps Carey himself wooed Kelly.

The first break between Local 201 leadership and the national office came in September 1948 when a majority of the executive board voted to send UE national officers and CIO president Philip Murray a telegram urging them to sign the non-Communist affidavits.[92] At a general membership meeting in November 1948, anticommunist members provoked criticism of the editorial content of *UE News*. The local Communist party had distributed a leaflet in Lynn that was similar in content to the front page editorial of *UE News*. It called on workers to hold Truman to the campaign promises he made in order to steal the thunder of third-party candidate Henry Wallace. Local 201 anticommunists argued that the leaflet showed the Communist party dominated the UE. The membership instructed Kelly, their business agent, to contact the national office and find out "how the paper is operated and who is responsible for its editorial policy." They also wanted to know how to stop the paper from being delivered to their homes.[93]

Around this time, anticommunists at the Everett supercharger plant introduced resolutions at membership meetings condemning communist infiltration in the UE. As a result of their complaints, Local 201 set up a committee to

investigate the allegations and to make recommendations for further action by the members. In March 1949, the committee recommended that Local 201 "urge national officers to use all nationwide communication systems within their power to combat charges that the UE is Communist dominated and to insure the UE membership that they themselves are not Communists."[94]

Anticommunists did a good job using national publicity to stir up dissent among the rank and file. They continued to press for compliance with the Taft-Hartley non-Communist affidavits, an issue that tended to make national officers look guilty. If they were not communists, why did they refuse to sign the oaths? In March 1949, Local 201's executive board sent a second telegram to national officers demanding they file the affidavits.[95] At the same time, anticommunists began tapping into international cold war tensions as well. In April 1949, the membership voted to wire the Massachusetts Congressional delegation and Secretary of State Dean Acheson, urging them to pressure the United Nations to demand a new trial for Cardinal Mindzenty of Hungary and to work for release of prisoners from slave labor camps in the Soviet Union.[96] Eastern European workers were particularly concerned about these issues and wanted their union to take a stand against Soviet aggression.

No one knew, however, how many converts the anticommunists recruited. One vote suggested skilled workers still backed the UE. In April 1949, the AFL's

attempt to win over die sinkers at the River Works plant came to a head when the NLRB scheduled an election. The Die Sinkers International Conference, an AFL craft organization, was the only union on the ballot. The UE could not be listed because its officers refused to file the non-Communist affidavits. The UE mounted a vigorous "no union" campaign to maintain the status quo. The final vote was 91 (55 percent) for "no union" and 71 (45 percent) for the Die Sinkers.[97] Although this was only an election among a small fraction of the work force, it shows these highly skilled workers were not ready to abandon the UE.

At a Dayton, Ohio meeting in May 1949, the MDA nominated Fred Kelly to run against Fitzpatrick. Three hundred delegates attended the meeting to plan a "war" on the left wingers. Kelly told fellow anticommunists: "You've got to put up with Commies spying in your local. Give them as little information as possible. Fight them every inch of the way."[98]

A week after he returned to Lynn, the first open battle between Kelly and Fitzpatrick erupted in a membership meeting. The Kelly forces wanted to hold a referendum in the local on whether Kelly or Fitzpatrick should be elected president of the UE. The outcome would lock all delegates into voting for the winner at the national convention, prevent splitting Local 201's votes, and deliver a large block of votes to the winner. Kelly gambled on winning the referendum. The resolution calling for the referendum lost

at the afternoon membership meeting attended by day shift workers, but won at the evening meeting when Kelly supporters packed the hall. Throughout the day, the River Works and Everett plants buzzed about the open split between Kelly and Fitzpatrick who had been once been close friends.[99]

The next day Fitzpatrick put out a flyer headlined "What's Happening in Local 201?" He claimed that nine out of thirteen executive board members supported him, and that the entire board had previously rejected unanimously the idea of a referendum. He accused Kelly of "staging a plot" and described the resolution as unconstitutional. But Fitzpatrick's effort to shore up his position backfired. Four executive board members said they had been tricked into having their names used on the Fitzpatrick flyer. Ray Wilson, a National Guard captain said: "I hate Communism and do not stand for the party-line Commies who are trying to sabotage this union." The executive board set a date for the referendum election and a pre-election rally to which it invited the press.[100]

Four weeks later, Local 201 members voted between Kelly and Fitzpatrick. The national office and Fred Kelly exchanged angry telegrams, both sides blaming the other for disrupting the real work of the local. Fitzgerald told Kelly that he was "promoting [his] personal ambitions for office" instead of doing the business agent's work. Kelly pointed out that the *Daily Worker* published similar charges

under a picture of Fitzgerald. He objected when the national office set up a satellite office in Lynn and sent organizers in to "disorganize the organized."[101]

Kelly won 72 percent of the vote; Fitzgerald won 28 percent. Approximately 63 percent of eligible workers voted in the referendum. Turnout for officer and steward elections hovered about 30 percent. Kelly ran best in the West Lynn plant (73 percent) and worst in the Everett supercharger plant (67 percent). Lynn's local newspaper reported Kelly won because he waged a "militant fight against Communistic influences that brought support from both Catholic and Protestant clergy." Kelly also had help from ACTU organizers. Fitzpatrick, according to the paper, had once been very popular in Local 201 but lost support when he promoted Henry Wallace for president the previous year.[102]

In September 1949, at the national UE convention, Fitzpatrick defeated Kelly by a vote of 2335 to 1500. Some Local 201 delegates, including Fitzpatrick, disregarded the referendum vote and did not vote for Kelly. The following month, Kelly tried unsuccessfully to unseat Paul Seymour, a UE loyalist, as president of District Council 2. Numerically, it was a very close vote: 289 for Seymour and 263 for Kelly. By local, however, Seymour won handily: 53 for Seymour, 14 for Kelly, and 4 split their vote.[103] These figures suggest that without concentrated organizing by anticommunists, UE workers chose to remain with their union

in spite of the red baiting. They also point to the pattern of the 1950 elections when the IUE won big locals where it concentrated all its efforts and lost smaller locals that it ignored. Both elections attest to the underlying strength of local control.

When Kelly lost to Seymour, he and his followers walked out of the District Council meeting to openly plan a secession movement. On October 28, 1949, a majority of Local 201's executive board voted to stop paying *per capita* dues. On November 13th, 2,000 people attended a meeting called by Kelly to form a new union. James Carey, the main speaker, presented Kelly with a charter for Local 201, IUE-CIO. While Carey spoke, hecklers challenged him to prove that UE leaders were communists. Carey replied: "I don't have to prove it, the FBI will. The time has long since come when Communists must be cleaned out of the CIO and the American labor movement."[104]

For the next six months, the UE and IUE worked feverishly to position themselves for NLRB elections in all GE plants scheduled for May 1950. Kelly's sole message was anticommunism and red-baiting. In a flurry of campaigning just before the election, Secretary of Labor Maurice Tobin, CIO president Philip Murray, and Jim Carey came to Lynn to pitch the same message. Tobin broke precedent by taking sides in a labor dispute because the election represented "a vital issue of Americanism, not an issue of trade unionism." He came to Lynn as an American fighting communism. "No

other issue exists here... It is my political duty to drive Communists out of the unions." Murray said "I hate Communism because it speaks evil. Communism is the very antithesis of democracy." He told the crowd he had talked to Fitzgerald, Emspak and Matles many times trying to convince them to change their ways, but they refused.[105]

Alfred Coulthard was the UE's most prominent speaker. When Tobin announced he would visit Lynn on behalf of the IUE, Coulthard agreed to break his silence and openly side with the UE. To do this, he resigned from his position on the Massachusetts State Labor Board. Coulthard was highly regarded in Lynn; UE members named their union hall after him. Two thousand members jammed the hall to hear him speak. He talked about the formation of the union, how much it had meant to workers in the plant, and how much it had accomplished. He stressed that communism was a false issue; the real issue being which union would do a better job representing workers. Coulthard surprised many old timers. In 1941, he wrote a harsh editorial in the local's newspaper equating communism with nazism and condemning communists in the labor movement. "Men are not free if they are members of the Communist or Nazi Party... This writer will go out on a limb. There should be no room for leadership in a Democratic set-up for an avowed disbeliever in Democracy."[106] Coulthard's 1950 endorsement of the left-led UE carried great weight and helps account for the closeness of the vote in Lynn.

Fred Kelly reaped many rewards for changing sides. Murray appointed him to fill Fitzgerald's seat on the CIO executive council after the UE ouster. Within the IUE, Kelly had to step aside for Carey who was elected president. However, he was elected president of IUE's District Council 2, a position which he turned into a full-time job.[107]

The split between the IUE and the UE in the River Works, West Lynn and Everett production units remained fairly constant in the early 1950s. In May 1950, the vote was 55 percent (IUE) to 44 percent (UE); in December 1953, in another NLRB election, the tally was 54 percent (IUE) to 46 percent (UE). The IUE did not win over more workers even after the full gale force of McCarthyism hit Massachusetts.

Anticommunism among workers in Local 201 grew slowly throughout the 1940s. The Catholic church was a constant force in promoting anticommunism and attacking local UE leadership. St. Mary's labor school trained Catholic UE stewards and activists in anticommunist Catholic labor doctrine and organizing skills. The labor school had ties to active ACTU chapters in New York. Some Local 201 anticommunists also worked with MDA, the national Carey-ACTU alliance formed to oust the UE leadership from within. Anticommunist activists used Local 201 membership meetings to criticize national UE leadership on its foreign and its failure to sign the Taft-Hartley affidavits. When Fred Kelly, Local 201's business agent, was converted,

anticommunists could coordinate better local attacks on UE leadership with statewide and national UE efforts. Kelly's most important ally in Massachusetts was John Callahan, business agent of Local 255 in Pittsfield.

## Local 255, Pittsfield

Local 255 also represented GE workers. The electrical giant came to Pittsfield in 1903 when it bought out Stanley Electric, a local, well-established company that manufactured alternating current generators. Prior to World War I, 6,000 Yankees and "old immigrant" Irish and Germans worked at GE. War-time production opened up jobs to newer immigrants, primarily Italians, Poles and other eastern Europeans. World War II brought women into the plant. At peak production in the early 1940s, 12,000 people worked at GE in Pittsfield. Working men and women from industrial towns all over the Berkshires considered GE jobs to be the best in the area.[108]

The UE chartered Local 255 in 1939, three years after its founding. Union men from the big GE local in Schenectady, one of UE's pioneers, organized the Pittsfield local. As in Lynn, Pittsfield workers most receptive to these early organizing efforts were high paid, high skilled welders and winders.[109]

John Callahan, Local 255's leading anticommunist, helped organize the GE local serving as shop steward and officer before becoming business agent in 1945. He was an

embattled leader, who frequently feuded with local leaders and national officers. Unpredictable, he often surprised other union leaders with sudden policy changes. Callahan was also impressionable and thin-skinned, and a willing anticommunist when influenced by like minded people.

UE loyalists in Pittsfield believed Callahan began working with Carey as early as the 1943 annual convention, which he attended as a delegate for Local 255. The convention that year was a spectacle of patriotic unity until the issue of James Carey was raised. By 1943, national officers had broken irrevocably with Carey. Convention delegates voted down a resolution endorsing Carey for another term as secretary-treasurer of the CIO. When Local 255's convention delegates reported back to the membership meeting, they failed to mention the anti-Carey resolution. Callahan took the floor, disclaiming accusations he said were made at the convention that he was working for Carey. Callahan made a motion requesting a national officer attend their next membership meeting and defend him.[110] This episode helps us understand Callahan's character. If he was not working with Carey, as he claimed, why make an issue out of it?

Father Eugene Marshall, pastor of St. Mary's, the largest Catholic church in Pittsfield, led the anticommunist crusade in Pittsfield. His church overlooked the sprawling GE plant and serviced most Catholic GE workers and their families. Marshall admired Father Charles Owen Rice of

Pittsburgh, the most well known labor priest in America. Rice led the ACTU movement in Pittsburgh, and was Carey's most valuable ally in MDA even though Rice did not think very highly of Carey's leadership ability. Rice had a popular weekly radio broadcast in Pittsburgh from which he preached an uncompromising message of anticommunism. He masterminded the ouster of communists from UE's big Pittsburgh local and was Marshall's mentor.[111]

Marshall used the pulpit to warn GE workers about the dangers of communism within the UE. One sermon, delivered in June 1946, compared the "two ways of life--Christian and Communistic." In it, he preached that parishioners should be concerned about the spread of communism. He explained that communist minorities exercise influence because other people were lazy and did not bother to get involved. This is how communists took over in Spain, Mexico and Russia, according to Marshall. Allowing Reds to remain within the borders of the United State threatened national security.

Marshall's words echoed the concerns of eastern European workers. In February 1948, Local 255 passed unanimously a resolution "condemning the Hungarian Government for their treatment of Cardinal Mindzenty." The lack of opposition shows the importance of events in eastern Europe to workers with relatives now living under Soviet rule. The resolution called on UE's national officers to take the same position and to publish a public statement in *UE News*.[112] National officers failed to respond to the

resolution and *UE News* editorial policy continued to attack the Marshall Plan, positions that increased the pull of anticommunism among eastern European workers.

Marshall told his parishioners to help the cause by fighting communist influence in the UE. He cautioned the working class audience not to be fooled by union leaders. Albert Fitzgerald "has a fine name that might disarm anyone, but he's as Red as the flag of Russia." Marshall implied that local leaders were also communists. "I suppose not more than three percent of the union here is Communistic, but the delegates they sent to the convention in Milwaukee last month voted to support the Red top."[113]

Callahan was one of those delegates. Upset by Marshall's implication, he issued a statement to the *Berkshire Eagle*: "I cannot possibly conceive of any basis, other than vicious rumor, on which such charges are made. It is as ridiculous to say that our national organization is dominated by communists as it is to imply that there are communists within our local which are dominating its activities."[114] Two months later, however, at the State CIO Council meeting, Callahan worked with the constitutional committee to pass an amendment prohibiting members of the Communist party, or any communist, fascist, or nazi organization, from holding office. When Callahan returned to Pittsfield from the meeting, he held a press conference to take credit for the amendment.[115]

Callahan acted on his own at the state CIO convention, shocking Local 255 officers who also attended the meeting. Pete Jacquot, president of Local 255, called an emergency meeting at his house as soon as he returned from the CIO convention to tell other union leaders about Callahan's actions. He opposed the Callahan amendment; other officers who did not attend the meeting agreed with Jacquot. They wanted to take action against Callahan and his wife, who worked in the union office and had considerable influence over him. Jacquot argued against it. He convinced the group it was more important to maintain unity in the face of scheduled discussions with GE on the "wage-price question." He only wanted to warn them about what Callahan was doing in case he tried to push through a similar amendment to the local's constitution.[116]

Callahan reversed his position the following summer when he supported a strongly worded resolution condemning the anticommunist MDA at a District Council meeting. Callahan said the MDA, Father Marshall and the press were "smearing the UE" and making it difficult for them to collect PAC contributions from members. He reported that "now people are coming down who are disrupting our meetings and we can't do our business. We are improving because some good friends of mine who have been involved with [MDA] and attended some of their meetings, are fed up."[117] Perhaps Callahan learned local officers disagreed with his

anticommunist activities at the state CIO meeting and decided to pull back.

The disruption Callahan reported probably came from Catholic anticommunists. Marshall recruited GE workers in Church-sponsored groups, like the Holy Name Society, and helped them organize an anticommunist bloc within Local 255. They aimed to drive a wedge between UE members and national leaders. They spread rumors that other CIO leaders said UE Secretary-Treasurer Matles "sold them down the river" with the latest contract; and they urged members not to contribute to the UE's PAC because the money went to Russia.[118]

By 1948, Callahan joined the people he condemned the year before. Partly, it was to retaliate against the national office. During the six-week nationwide strike against GE in early 1946, the UE national office sent Ed Turkowski to Pittsfield to assist Local 255. Callahan chafed at Turkowski's presence, believing the national office did not trust him to conduct a militant strike. He denied the charge, claiming the national office failed to credit "the fine job that has been done here and the fact that we enjoyed unusually strong community support."[119] Callahan also joined the anticommunists because, like Fred Kelly in Lynn, he too had a "conversion." President Truman met with Callahan and helped woo him to the anticommunist cause during a whistle-stop campaign swing through Massachusetts in 1948.

Callahan and other anticommunists in Local 255 used the Taft-Hartley non-Communist affidavits as an issue to discredit the national leadership. In October 1948, a month after Local 201 in Lynn demanded compliance, Local 255's executive board demanded that national officers "explain their position."[120] In November, members passed a resolution denouncing the editorial policies of the *UE News* for never criticizing the Soviet Union, for failing to congratulate Truman on his victory, and for opposing the Marshall plan.[121] Local 201 in Lynn made similar complaints during the same month. Whether Callahan and Kelly followed a nationwide MDA strategy or simply coordinated efforts, it was not a coincidence that both locals took similar actions at the same time.

Father Marshall played a key role in this period as well. Supporters of the national office wanted to get the November anti-*UE News* resolution rescinded. In January 1949, Marshall wrote parishioners on St. Mary's stationery urging them to attend an up-coming membership meeting and "vote your convictions." He said the meeting would "uphold or denounce the men who had the moral courage to be real Americans and stand by the USA... [Now is the time for] the right wing [to] be organized and make its presence felt."[122]

The Callahan-Marshall forces pushed through a resolution asking all Local 255 officers and District Council president Paul Seymour to sign non-Communist affidavits. Anticommunists claimed they wanted the

affidavits "solely for our own reassurance" and not to force compliance with Taft-Hartley.[123] Father Marshall distributed postcards to UE parisioners telling them to "Vote American--Vote for Christ."[124] The meeting marked the beginning of the open split between anticommunists (right wingers as they called themselves) and unionists loyal to the national officers (left wingers as they called themselves).

Two weeks later, anticommunists sponsored a resolution condemning UE Field Organizer Gerard Steinberg for trying "to disrupt the affairs of Local 255 by seeking to persuade certain of its members to act in a manner that would be detrimental to the welfare of the local." Anticommunist officers barred Steinberg and Albert Smith, UE International Representative, who still refused to sign non-Communist affidavits. Callahan called a press conference after the meeting to denounce Smith and Steinberg as "troublemakers" and "disrupters."[125] A week later, the *Springfield Union* published an editorial written by Callahan demanding UE national officers sign non-Communist affidavits. He claimed GE workers were not joining the union because it had a "red tag" on it.[126]

In spring 1949, while Fred Kelly orchestrated the referendum idea for the Lynn local, Callahan pressed national officers to sign the affidavits. Callahan called a press conference to announce that Fitzgerald, Matles, and Emspak had been invited to the May 26th general membership

meeting where they would be asked to sign the affidavits "in the presence of the assembly." The next day, May 24th, Callahan informed the national officers of the meeting by registered letter. Callahan timed the letters to arrive in New York on May 25th, one day before the meeting. They wired back: "None of the UE National Officers will participate in any such staged monkeyshines with you and Fred Kelly."[127]

In June 1949, Callahan surprised everyone with an "off the cuff" talk to the Pittsfield Rotary Club on the "inside story" of the 1946 strike. Callahan accused the national office of wanting to incite violence by sending a "known Communist from St. Louis" to help the UE field representative organize a "goon squad" to overturn cars and use lead pipes against police. He divulged to the Rotarians that only his level headed leadership and close cooperation with the Pittsfield police chief prevented the violence the communists wanted.[128] National news media reported Callahan's remarks. GE's publicity department made good use of the information, reporting in their newsletter that: "Reds were sent to Pittsfield to organize goon squads."

The UE national office reacted angrily and quickly to Callahan's speech. In order to save face within the union, Callahan made a retraction in the press. After denying that he said the UE national officers "wanted or encouraged violence during the strike period," he launched into a renewed attack on the UE leadership:[129]

> Communists thrive on bloodshed, disorder and unemployment... for a number of years the national office of our union has been influenced and controlled by persons who are either Communists or Communist sympathizers. I did not charge that all our national officers are Communists, just two out of three. But the reputation of the third for following the Commy line is well established.

Callahan was a loose cannon. In May 1949, when he joined the national GE Negotiating Committee, he wrote Charles Wilson, GE's president, offering to withdraw the Conference Board's wage demands in response for a promise to maintain current job levels. Callahan wrote privately, without authorization from or knowledge of the Conference Board. Wilson rejected the deal.[130]

Callahan's unauthorized communication with Wilson outraged the rest of the GE Negotiating Committee, which immediately removed him from the committee. District Council 2, however, had to ratify the removal. The vote proved more of a referendum on the open split between right wingers and left wingers than on Callahan's actions. Fred Kelly, Callahan's strongest defender, argued the motion was a subterfuge to "smear a guy who has turned to the right wing." District Council 2 delegates narrowly rejected the ouster motion, 281 to 311. Local 255, Local 201 in Lynn, and smaller, strongly anticommunist locals in Bridgeport, Connecticut supported Callahan. At the same meeting, Callahan and Kelly combined their votes and defeated District Council president, Paul Seymour, and UE national representative Albert Smith as delegates to the national

convention. It was the first time either man had been opposed for election as delegate.[131]

Both sides fought hard in the struggle for control of the UE. Since its formation, UE built a reputation for solidarity with its striking locals. In District 2, the big Lynn and Pittsfield locals gave generously to small locals on strike. As the right wing/left wing split deepened, local leaders had to choose whether to support a striking local based on the politics of its leaders. Workers at Keystone Manufacturing Company, a small shop outside Boston, waged a long bitter strike in spring 1949. Local 261, Boston's big amalgamated that remained loyal to national officers, represented Keystone. Local 255 sent Keystone workers a mere $62.47. A local officer explained the collection was so meager because "our people resent the fact that [Local 261] Business Agent, Hannegan, was sent to picket the [MDA] conference, where that money could have helped feed some of the strikers."[132] Callahan participated in that MDA conference and helped get Fred Kelly the right wingers' endorsement to run against Fitzgerald. In sharp contrast, when striking workers at Singer Sewing Machine Company in Bridgeport, Connecticut asked for help, Local 255 sent $2,500.[133] Officers of the Singer local were firmly in the anticommunist, right wing camp.

Callahan and his allies copied Kelly's unit-vote strategy to deliver more votes for anticommunist candidates. When Local 255 met following the 1949 convention, right

wingers sponsored a motion instructing Local 255 delegates to vote for Fred Kelly as president of District Council 2. The motion finessed direct election of delegates by empowering the executive board, now controlled by right wingers, to appoint the delegates. At a later meeting, right wingers pushed through a motion stating "any delegate who violates the wishes of the membership will be immediately removed from office." When District Council 2 met, Kelly lost to incumbent president Paul Seymour by a narrow margin. Pete Jacquot, Local 255 president, voted against Kelly in defiance of the right wingers' mandate. Up to this point, Jacquot had remained neutral. The day after the District Council meeting, Local 255's executive board suspended Jacquot from the union he helped build by a vote of 21 to 12.[134]

Once the CIO expelled the UE, the split between right wingers and left wingers within Local 255 turned into a battle between the UE and the IUE. Father Marshall threw his weight behind the IUE. At Sunday mass on November 20, 1949, the day of a membership meeting to discuss seceding from the UE, Marshall preached from the pulpit:[135]

> Do you want to belong to a bona fide American trade union or do you wish to belong to a party line union... I don't think there is any alternative for a loyal American citizen... Any man who prefers to follow the Messrs. Fitzpatrick, Emspak and Matles is in absolute disobedience to the directives of the Holy Father, lacks the common sense of a patriotic citizen and is a Catholic in name only. It's a choice between Christ and Stalin.

There was no uncertainty in Marshall's position. James Carey spoke that afternoon praising Callahan for working "to oust the Communist influence from the National and local organization." Like Marshall, Carey's only message was red-baiting. He criticized UE national officers on foreign policy issues without ever mentioning any trade union issues. "This is a fight between the American worker and the Communist Party." Callahan echoed Carey's message, telling members "we're preventing you from turning over our money to the Communist Party."[136]

Local 255 split into rival camps. The NLRB scheduled a representation election for May 1950. As in Lynn, both sides campaigned feverishly in the final days. Father Marshall did everything he could to defeat the UE. Ten days before the vote, he brought Father Charles Owen Rice, ACTU's national chaplain and pre-eminent labor priest, to Pittsfield. The program, sponsored by the Knights of Columbus, was broadcast over a local radio station. Rice praised Marshall as "one of the most outspoken and courageous priests in the United States" before tracing the development of Catholic labor doctrine. When asked about the UE-IUE election, he said GE workers were fortunate because they had the opportunity to "come to grips with the Communist menace." According to Rice, communism was the only issue in the election.[137]

Left wingers understood well the influence of Fathers Rice and Marshall among union members. Hoping to outflank

the priests, a UE delegation called on Marshall's bishop in Springfield, a man with more moderate views. They asked him to assure GE workers they were free to vote their conscience in the election. With such a statement in hand, they planned to tell union members the election was a personal matter, not a "choice between Stalin and Christ." But the plan backfired. The two hour meeting ended with no public statement from the UE delegation or the Bishop.[138]

The Sunday before the election, Marshall and the pastor at the other Catholic church in Pittsfield preached against the UE. Both priests quoted liberally from two documents: Albany's Bishop Gibbons's statement denouncing the UE as "Communist controlled and Communist dominated" and J. Edgar Hoover's report finding "every member of the Communist party is pledged to sabotage our country if war should come with Russia." While Marshall preached, the women of St. Mary's annual breakfast gathering heard Regina Kirkpatrick, publicity director of the National Catholic Lay Women's Retreat Movement, denounce the UE. "You are either going to be on Our Lady's side or Satan's side."[139]

The final drive of the campaign brought James Carey back to Pittsfield. Two days before the election, he "revealed" new information that local UE field organizer Gerard Steinberg was a "dangerous Communist... and traitor to our nation." In a new twist on red-baiting, he invited Steinberg to sue him for defamation of character implying if Steinberg did not sue, then the charge must be true.

Callahan repeated the Steinberg charge at a noontime gate rally the day of the election. He quoted a report prepared by a CIO investigating committee that was staffed with UE dissidents, and distributed a leaflet detailing the charges. "We have more Jerry," he taunted, "We welcome a suit." It was impossible for Steinberg to refute the charges on such short notice. The tactic served to bring the issue of communist infiltration home to Local 255. It worked well, and gave Callahan and his anticommunist allies a new issue to present as workers filed into polling places to vote.

The anticommunist IUE carried Local 255 with 70 percent of the vote, a larger margin than in Lynn. Undoubtedly, Father Marshall was an important factor in the victory. After the vote, the winners paraded past St. Mary's Church with a casket labelled "UE" and waved to Father Marshall who beamed back from the steps of his parish.[140] His message was particularly well received among eastern European immigrants concerned about the Soviet takeover of Poland and persecution of Catholics in that region. Another factor was the lack of a leftist tradition in the local. UE loyalists in Lynn came closer to staving off anticommunists than their counterparts in Pittsfield because of the endorsement they received from Alfred Coulthard.

There was only one issue in Pittsfield, and it was not a trade union issue. At the victory celebration, Callahan reminded supporters: "Communism has been repudiated in Pittsfield. The issue in this fight was communism."

Callahan did not gain professionally when the IUE was formed, as Kelly and other anticommunist organizers did. He built his personal image by embracing anticommunism. Through it, he gained the endorsement of Father Marshall, rubbed elbows with famous people like President Truman and Philip Murray, and worked directly with James Carey. Local business leaders in the Rotary listened raptly when he spoke, and they praised his leadership.

## Springfield/Holyoke Locals

Springfield is the largest urban area in western Massachusetts. It sits on the Connecticut River, which provided both power and transportation necessary to develop a robust, diversified manufacturing economy in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The Springfield Armory anchored the local economy. Established in 1776, it manufactured weapons for successive wars, and fostered metal working and machine tool building throughout the region.[141]

By 1949, there were ten UE locals at metalworking and machine shops in Springfield and Holyoke, its sister city. Combined, these ten UE locals represented over 8,000 workers. The largest, Local 202, represented 3,000 workers at a Westinghouse plant that manufactured electrical, radio, and automotive machine parts. The other locals scattered among machine shops varied in size from 1,300 to 25 workers. Local 206 represented 1,300 workers at American Bosch, a machine shop that manufactured magnets and diesel injection

equipment; Local 278 represented 1,200 workers at Chapman Valve, a machine shop that manufactured valves for fire hydrants. The rest of the locals represented 700 or fewer workers.

Organizers at the big Westinghouse local helped found the UE. They secured a Federal Labor Union charter from the AFL and followed Carey into the UE. Matt Campbell, an older, skilled toolmaker and Scottish immigrant, led the Westinghouse local. According to labor historian Ronald Schatz, the Westinghouse union enjoyed a "cozy" relationship with management, an experience that shaped Campbell's attitude toward organizing. At the 1937 convention, he questioned whether the union needed to spend union its funds on organizing.[142]

Campbell served on the UE's national executive board and as president of District Council 2 until his death in 1941. Carey, Campbell and Harry Block (Carey's friend and ally from the Philadelphia Philco local) formed the conservative wing of the UE executive committee. Campbell supported the young Carey, nominating him at the 1937 convention and seconding his nomination in 1940. Campbell told delegates he had never met a man or woman who could take Carey's place. At national conventions, Campbell led floor fights against foreign policy resolutions sponsored by left-wing UE officers and supported the right of locals to exclude communists, fascists and nazis from membership.[143]

Historians Ronald Schatz and Ronald Filippelli characterize Campbell as a cautious unionist, allied with the anticommunist wing. In a more recent work, Robert Forrant challenges this description. In 1935, Campbell ran for mayor of Springfield on a third party labor ticket. The party's electoral strategy hoped to recruit homeowners, small businessmen, office workers as well as workers. In a period of popular front politics, Campbell and his labor party allies refused to work with the Communist party. His philosophy followed Leo XIII's vision of labor-management cooperation and fervent anticommunist.[144]

Campbell's conservative unionism and anticommunism rubbed off on UE locals in the Springfield/Holyoke area, or perhaps he simply mirrored the beliefs of Springfield's metalworkers. After his death in 1941, others continued fighting for the conservative tradition he represented. John Paran, an assembler turned business agent for the Westinghouse local, consistently voted for Carey and the right wing slate of national officers. He served as spokesman for opposition to foreign policy resolutions sponsored by the left wing. At the 1948 convention, the national press quoted Paran when he questioned the "Americanism" of speakers favoring the majority report. "I am sick and tired of hearing about the faults of the United States," he told the delegates. "I'd like to hear about the faults of Russia."[145]

Springfield UE anticommunists worked together to advance their agenda. When the Chapman Valve local sponsored a resolution in 1946 barring communists from holding office in the union, they picked Frank Hall, business agent at the Bosch local to speak for them at the national convention.[146] Although convention delegates defeated the resolution, Hall reintroduced it at the next District Council 2 meeting where delegates again voted it down.[147] By 1949, Tony Cimino, an assembler at Westinghouse, led the Springfield right wing group. Cimino attended national MDA meetings and belonged to its executive committee. In summer 1949, he passed out buttons in Springfield with the slogan "I helped build UE-CIO, not UE-CP."[148]

In most Springfield locals, the right wing was firmly entrenched. Members of Local 220 at Package Machinery elected Leo Messier, an assembler and leading anticommunist, to thirteen consecutive terms as their president. In other locals, however, the right wing and left wing battled for control. The Bosch local, for instance, equivocated in relationship to the national office.

In September 1946, the national office launched an ambitious program to present its views on national economic affairs to its members. Julius Emspak impressed delegates with the importance of distributing UE literature at a time "when distortion of the news become a threat to the peace and security of ourselves and the world."[149] The leaflets

were easy to read with clear graphics and cartoon characters. The national office sent its first UE Leaflet of the Week, "Why High Food Prices?", to Bosch in November 1946. A handwritten notation on the circular read "Table."[150] Five months later, the national office wrote the Bosch local announcing a reduction in the price of pamphlets and noting that the local had not ordered any copies. A handwritten notation on this circular read "Reject."[151] The Bosch local rejected other literature as well, including the revised edition of the UE Handbook and a pamphlet written by James Matles titled "The Members Run This Union -- An Answer to The Saturday Evening Post."[152] At the same time, however, the Bosch local asked the national office for assistance with its negotiations. When the membership rejected a Company proposal on wage increases, it voted to ask a national representative to sit in on all future negotiations. Two months later, Bosch members voted to thank Jack Davis, a UE national organizer, for his "valuable advice" to their contract committee and assistance during negotiations.[153] What the Bosch local wanted from the national office was trade union assistance, not propaganda.

Ralph Forsstrom, a toolmaker at Bosch, led the left wing within the local. He came to the company during the war, serving as steward and then as president in 1946. When Frank Hall, a leader of the anticommunist UE group in Springfield, left Bosch in 1947, Forsstrom ran for Hall's

position as business agent narrowly defeating Ralph Chicketti, an anticommunist rival. Forsstrom remained loyal to the national office throughout the 1948 presidential election campaign. His endorsement of the Wallace candidacy and opposition to the Marshall plan cost him support among the rank and file. At a general membership meeting in September 1948, Forsstrom's detractors pushed through a resolution calling on the local's president to "instruct the Business Agent in his duties in line with out policies, that of the National CIO policies."[154] Even so, Forsstrom won reelection as business agent in 1948 again defeating Chicketti.

At the GE local in Holyoke, anticommunists led a similar effort to purge local officers loyal to the national office. In January 1949, anticommunist members tried to oust their business agent, Leon Massa, "who is considered to have extreme left tendencies." The effort failed, however, and Massa was reelected with 68 percent of the vote. Anticommunists also accused their president, Robert Halliday, of leaning to the left, and tried to prevent his election as a delegate to the UE national convention. Halliday denounced the red-baiting insisting he was "bitterly opposed Communism, its philosophy and its principles." The battle, he argued, was about seniority, not communism.[155]

While Forsstrom, Massa and Halliday struggled to maintain a principled position, other local UE officers in

the greater Springfield area bolted to the anticommunist camp. William Lieberman, an assembler and president of the Westinghouse local, was one of the turn-coats. Although anticommunists maintained a strong presence in his local, other Westinghouse members and officers supported the UE national office on its record of trade union achievements. The animosity between men on each side of the issue ran deep. When Lieberman suddenly embraced anticommunism in October 1949, right before the CIO ouster, union members were puzzled. One Westinghouse worker told a reporter that Lieberman "always used to go along with the national officers, then all of a sudden he switches against them and is all for the right wing. He and Paran have been anything but buddies for ten years. Now they are pals. How come?"[156] Like Callahan and Kelly, Lieberman wanted to be on the winning team.

When the split between the CIO and the UE finally occurred, anticommunists in greater Springfield, led by Tony Cimino, sprang into action. Locals firmly controlled by anticommunists immediately announced membership meetings to vote on seceding from the UE. Westinghouse, Chapman Valve, Van Norman, Montsanto and Package Company held meetings for "members only," thus excluding UE national representatives and organizers and preventing any meaningful debate on the issue. An officer of the Westinghouse local said they barred outsiders so no one could "dictate how the vote should go." All of these locals opted out of the UE by a

unanimous or an "overwhelming" vote. At some, the executive board had already voted to secede and members merely ratified their decision.[157]

UE international representative Albert Smith acknowledged the union had little chance of keeping any Springfield locals except for the Bosch local and a small GE local in Holyoke.[158] At Bosch, UE leaders banked on the leadership of business agent Ralph Forsstrom. However, Bosch hamstrung Forsstrom's efforts to shore up support for the UE. While Forsstrom was running for reelection as business agent in November 1949, right after the CIO ousted UE, Bosch officials jumped right into the breach. The company sent workers a notice announcing that they "decline[d] to participate in any formal dealings, such as negotiations or arbitration" with UE representatives. According to UE loyalists, Bosch was scheduled to bring an offer to the table on seniority right when they broke off negotiations. Completing these negotiations would have boosted Forsstrom's standing among union members. A few days before the election, Bosch fired Forsstrom for "being away from his job on union business" and barred him from entering the plant. His anticommunist opponent Ralph Chicketti hammered away at Forsstrom's failure to negotiate contract provisions on seniority and a pay raise. The Chicketti campaign leaflet charged that other Springfield UE shops received raises while workers at Bosch only got "talk and promises because [our] leaders spend all their time

talking about Henry Wallace." Bosch workers elected Chicketti by a narrow margin of 693 (53 percent) to 620 (47 percent).[159]

The victory emboldened Chicketti to put the issue of secession before the membership. Tony Cimino, now field director for the IUE in New England and leader of the anticommunist forces in greater Springfield, backed Chicketti's move. Cimino's new IUE job was full time, allowing him to quit working as an assembler at Westinghouse and devote himself fully to union organizing.[160] Cimino spoke at Bosch gate rallies urging workers to attend the scheduled membership meeting and vote for secession. He stressed the importance of remaining affiliated with the anticommunist CIO, saying the Red UE could not protect their interests. The IUE relied exclusively on red-baiting. Its flyer proclaimed that "the old UE is the last major stronghold of communism in the United States. If a decision must be made between labor policy and Communist policy, the old UE always follows the commie line." A UE flyer called for unity, pointing out all the ways Bosch was using the breach to stifle contract demands. [161]

The local Communist party cell in Springfield played right into the IUE's hands. It distributed "An Open Letter to Tony Cimino" at the Bosch plant backing the UE and attacking the IUE for colluding with Big Business to "get workers behind the cold war program." It predicted that "honest rank and filers" who know class struggle requires a

strong, united labor movement will reject the IUE. UE leaders reacted quickly distancing themselves as far as they could from the Communist party flyer. They circulated their own flyer condemning the party leaflets and warning members against them. "We reject and condemn," wrote the UE, "such open interference in the internal affairs of our union by the Communist Party, and warn them to cease their disruption of our union."[162]

The damage was done, however. Six hundred Bosch workers voted to withdraw from the UE and join the IUE. When the IUE collected enough cards, the NLRB scheduled a representation election for June 1950. The UE ran as the incumbent, arguing that management would not bargain with the IUE. This did not make sense, however, since Bosch already refused to bargain with either side. The IUE ran on the sole issue of anticommunism. Tony Cimino helped shape the message. He organized a United Front Committee in greater Springfield that coordinated anti-UE propaganda. Its banner read: "Vote Communism Out!" Chicketti distributed a speech by Congressman Foster Furcolo about "Communist Infiltration in Labor Unions" to all stewards and officers. He borrowed $2500 from the national IUE office to print flyers and newspapers during the campaign. In the end, red-baiting worked, and the IUE carried the election 964 (57 percent) to 724 (43 percent).[163] The following day, anticommunists moved to consolidate their position by pushing through an amendment to the local's by-laws barring

anyone from office "who actively opposed the creation of the IUE-CIO."[164]

The other local UE organizers hoped to retain was the GE plant in Holyoke. Robert Halliday, president of Local 264 and a UE loyalist, downplayed any right wing/left wing split in the local. According to Halliday, "if any distinction exists, it is between staunch labor supporters and company stooges." He thus tried to draw attention away from the issue of communism. However, an active anticommunist group within the local "welcomed the opportunity to divorce themselves from communist leaders in the UE."[165] In early November 1949, when left wing officers still ran the local, members voted "overwhelmingly" to remain in the UE. Halliday charged that "political ambitions of people seeking paid jobs at our expense" jeopardized their hard won contract. He referred to people like Tony Cimino, now on the IUE payroll.

The NLRB scheduled an election in May 1950. As in the rest of the commonwealth, UE and IUE forces pulled out all the stops in their campaign efforts. Jim Carey, the principal speaker at a pre-election rally at the GE plant, predictably hammered home the issue of communist infiltration in the UE. The UE, nevertheless, remained confident of victory, announcing when and where it would hold a victory dance. It was the IUE, however, which celebrated victory. In a "complete upset," the IUE won by a

vote of 233 (55 percent) to 190 (45 percent).[166] Once again, red-baiting carried the day.

The IUE swept all but two small Springfield locals. It won at Westinghouse by a vote of 2,335 (72 percent) to 862 (27 percent) and at Chapman Valve by a vote of 794 (73 percent) to 298 (27 percent). At Package Machinery, Blair Manufacturing, Montsano and Van Norman, the UE conceded before representation elections and was not even on the ballot. The only two shops the UE retained were at Worthington Pump, with 400 workers, and Stacey Manufacturing, with 50 workers. Tony Cimino, IUE's new Field Organizer, summed up the outcome well: "The fight to clean the Communists out of our union started here in Springfield. It is fitting that every major plant in this area has seen fit to stay with the CIO and reject decisively the phony balm of Communism."[167] Matt Campbell's legacy of prudent unionism, support for Carey, and uncompromising opposition to communism continued to make sense to a majority of electrical and machine shop workers in greater Springfield.

In his study of UE organizing at GE and Westinghouse, labor historian Ronald Schatz found that older, skilled workers supported the UE while younger, unskilled workers supported the IUE. Robert Forrant, in his study of the Springfield Bosch local, concurs. Some data from this study support Schatz's contention as well, but not all. When the Bosch local voted to secede from the UE in December 1949, 31

members opposed the move. Of the 17 UE loyalists whose job classification is ascertainable, 11 skilled workers, including five machinists, two mechanics, two toolmakers, one grinder and one calibrator, joined six unskilled workers, including four machine operators and two inspectors, to oppose secession from the UE. According to this small sample, skilled UE loyalists outnumbered unskilled UE loyalists two to one. Of the 11 anticommunist IUE organizers whose names appeared in newspaper accounts and whose job classification is ascertainable, six were skilled workers, including three machinists, one toolmaker, one steamfitter and one engineer, and five were unskilled workers, including four assemblers and one inspector. These data suggest IUE organizers split evenly between skilled and unskilled workers.

Forrant's work also adds a descriptive dimension to Schatz's thesis. Forrant found a higher proportion of skilled workers among all workers in Springfield than in comparative Massachusetts cities, as well as a high ratio of skilled to unskilled workers in Springfield's metal trades. Among Springfield's labor leaders, Forrant identified a high proportion of highly skilled workers. Schatz's thesis and Forrant's description do not match. If Schatz is correct, we would expect Springfield to be a UE stronghold with all its skilled metal workers. On the contrary, anticommunism gained an early foothold in Springfield. In 1949 and 1950, every large local bolted from the UE. Perhaps the problem

is that Schatz's thesis fails to credit two other important sources of anticommunism, Catholic labor theory and Soviet aggression in eastern Europe, that may have more saliency than skill level.

The scanty hard data from Pittsfield tend to confirm the Schatz thesis. As a whole, GE workers in Pittsfield were less skilled than Springfield's metal workers. In Pittsfield, the ratio of skilled to unskilled union organizers was 1:3; in Springfield, the ratio was 3:2. As Schatz predicts, in Pittsfield the percentage of skilled organizers in the UE was higher than in the IUE. Among UE loyalists were seven skilled workers, including a winder, machinist, press operator, lathe operator, taper and two welders, and ten unskilled "employees." Among IUE organizers were three skilled workers, including a machinist, toolmaker and electrician, and 18 unskilled "employees." Unfortunately, there is no ascertainable data for Lynn's GE workers.

## Conclusion

The fratricidal struggle between UE loyalists and IUE dissidents vividly illustrates how anticommunism operated on the state and local level in Massachusetts. Anticommunism was not an issue among rank and file union members until others made it so. Ambitious labor leaders, like politicians, latched onto red-baiting to promote partisan goals.

Workers were not easily won over. The strong localist tradition within the UE blocked Jim Carey and his anticommunist MDA allies from capturing the UE from within. UE members cared more about their leaders' trade union record than their political beliefs. The CIO's expulsion of the UE turned the tide for Carey. For union members, this was a real issue that affected their working lives. Losing CIO support weakened the UE. Before the split, workers chose between communist and anticommunist leaders, a political issue not a trade union issue; after the split, workers had to chose between the UE and the CIO.

Three factors account for rank and file affinity with the IUE and its program of virulent anticommunism. The Catholic church persuaded many workers to embrace Pope Leo XIII's vision of labor peace, mediation between labor and management, and denunciation of class conflict. For some workers, the moral force of Catholic labor theory carried more weight than labor union principles. Eastern European workers, who may been Catholic as well, linked domestic communism to Soviet agression in their homelands. Also, the IUE attracted younger, less skilled workers who had not worked with communist organizers during the popular front era.

Anticommunism provided common ground for Americans. Green and Murray, who disagreed on organizing industrial workers, agreed class antagonism hurt labor. CIO labor leaders and the Catholic hierarchy, who disagreed on the

role of the state, agreed that communists disrupted their vision of mediated labor-management relations. Catholic workers who promoted anticommunism did so on a moral or spiritual basis, not a material basis. For them, anticommunism was anticlassism.

## Notes

[1]Howard Kimeldorf, "WWII and the Deradicalization of American Labor: The ILWU as a Deviant Case," *Labor History*, Vol. 33, No. 2 (Spring 1992), pp. 248-278.

[2]Ronald Schatz, *The Electrical Workers: A History of Labor at General Electric and Westinghouse* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1983).

[3]Bert Cochrane, *Labor and Communism* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1977).

[4]Christopher L. Tomlins, *The State and the Unions: Labor Relations, Law, and the Organized Labor Movement, 1880-1960* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1985).

[5]Resolution No. 88, Proceedings of the 54th Annual Convention, Massachusetts State Federation of labor, 1939, pp. 77-78.

[6]Proceedings of the 53rd Annual Convention, Massachusetts State Federation of Labor, 1938, p. 103.

[7]Background information on the AFT is taken from Marjorie Murphy's excellent study, *Blackboard Unions: The AFT and the NEA, 1900-1980* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1990). *See also*, Robert W. Iverson, *The Communists and the Schools (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1959).*

[8]American Federation of Teachers Papers, Walter Reuther Library, Wayne State University (hereinafter AFT Papers), Series IV, Box 14, Folder "Local #85, Union of Boston H.S. Women Teachers,"; Box 16, Folder "Local #97, Cambridge,"; Box 17, Folder "Local #104, Lynn."

[9]Murphy, *Blackboard Unions*, 136.

[10]Walter Sidley to Florence Curtis Hanson, December 12, 1932, AFT Papers, Series IV, Box 25, Folder "#244-Lawrence Federation of Teachers."

[11]Membership figures from Per Capita Reports, AFT Papers, Series IV, Box 25, Folder "#244-Lawrence Federation of Teachers." *See also*, Walter Sidley to Irvin Kuenzli, June 15, 1948, ibid.

[12]*The United Teacher*, Vol. I, No. 1, November 30, 1934 in AFT Papers, Series IV, Box 25, Folder "#244-Lawrence Federation of Teachers."

[13]Walter Sidley to Irvin Kuenzli, September 7, 1937, AFT Papers, Series IV, Box 25, Folder "#244, Lawrence Federation of Teachers."

[14]Walter Sidley to Irvin Kuenzli, June 15, 1948, AFT Papers, Series IV, Box 25, Folder "#244--Lawrence Federation of Teachers."

[15]"C.L.C. Stalemates Red Probe in High Schools," *Civil Liberties Bulletin* (April-May 1939), Civil Liberties Union of Massachusetts Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston, Box 1, Folder "CLUM Bulletin, 1936-1939"; *Boston Globe*, February 7, 1939; *Boston Herald*, February 10, 1939; *Boston Post*, February 14, 1939.

[16]"The Yanks Are Not Coming Committee," *Greater Boston Teacher*, Vol. II, No. 9, May 1940, AFT Papers, Series IV, Box 12, Folder "Local 441."

[17]Program of Second Annual Meeting, Massachusetts State Branch, American Federation of Teachers, March 12, 1938 in AFT Papers, Series II, Box 8.

[18]*The Greater Boston Teacher*, Vol. II, No. 8, May 1940 AFT Papers, Series IV, Box 12, Folder "Local 441, Boston Federation of Teachers."

[19]Lucy Lieberman to Stanton Smith, March 3, 1941, AFT Papers, Series II, Box 8-24.

[20]Walter Sidley to Irvin Kuenzli, April 22, 1943, AFT Papers, Series IV, Box 25, Folder "#244--Lawrence Federation of Teachers"; Walter Sidley to Irvin Kuenzli, May 18, 1948, ibid.

[21]Memorandum from John D. Conners, "Re: Mary Cadigan Case," AFT Papers, Series XII, Box 92, Folder "Mary Cadigan case."

[22]Mary A. Burns to Carl J. Megel, December 8, 1956, AFT Papers (Accession #1071, January 5, 1982), Box 1, Folder "Boston Teachers Union, Local 66."

[23]Albert Sprague Coolidge to Irvin Kuenzli, December 21, 1950, AFT Papers, Series IV, Box 10, File "Cambridge Union of University Professors."

[24]The men who testified were Robert Gorham Davis, Granville Hicks and Daniel Boorstin.

[25]Monthly Per Capita Statements, AFT Papers, Series IV, Box 10, Folder "Cambridge Union of University Professors."

[26]Irvin Kuenzli to Albert Sprague Coolidge, January 11, 1943, AFT Papers, Series IV, Box 10, Folder "Cambridge Union of University Professors"; Albert Sprague Coolidge to Irvin Kuenzli, January 23, 1943, ibid.

[27]Resolution, August 6, 1941, AFT Papers, Series IV, Box 14, Folder "Local 470, Northfield (Mass.)."

[28]Monthly Report, February 1936, AFT Papers, Series VI, Box 27, Folder "262-New Bedford Teachers Union-Mass."

[29]Monthly Report, March 1936, AFT Papers, Series VI, Box 27, Folder "262-New Bedford Teachers Union-Mass."

[30]Monthly Report, November 1937, AFT Papers, Series VI, Box 27, Folder "262-New Bedford Teachers Union-Mass."

[31]*See e.g.*, *Boston Daily Globe*, October 4, 1948.

[32]Many scholars have written on the subject of anticommunism and the labor movement. Bert Cochran's *Labor and Communism: The Conflict that Shaped American Unions* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977) was one of the first. Cochran argues that "the labor movement was probably the single most important battleground of [the] internal cold war." He is sympathetic to the urgency of liberal labor leaders in the early postwar period to purge communists from leadership in the United Auto Workers and United Electrical Workers Union. Harvey A. Levenstein is more critical of the impact of anticommunism in his book, *Communism, Anticommunism, and the CIO* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1981). He argues that federal policy played right into the internal split between communists and liberals in the CIO and succeeded in destroying the left wing of the labor movement. A collection of essays edited by Steve Rosswurm, *The CIO's Left-Led Unions* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1992), examine the devastating impact of anticommunism on unions with left-wing leadership.

Other labor historians have looked at the role of anticommunism in the context of case histories of particular unions. Studies that were particularly helpful to this chapter include Ronald W. Schatz, *The Electrical Workers:* A History of Labor at General Electric and Westinghouse, 1923-60 (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1983); Ronald L. Filippelli and Mark D. McColloch, *Cold War in the Working Class: The Rise and Decline of the United Electrical Workers* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995); and Stephen Meyer, *"Stalin Over Wisconsin": The Making and Unmaking of Militant Unionism* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1992).

[33]Scholars still debate the key factor behind the success of the communist purge of the UE. Steve Rosswurm credits the Catholic Church, particularly after 1945 when the Church shifted from a positive theory of anticommunism that spoke to class issues as well as religious and moral issues, to a purely negative theory that sought only to destroy Communists in the CIO. *See*, Steve Rosswurm, "The Catholic Church and the Left-Led Unions: Labor Priests, Labor Schools and the ACTU," in Rosswurm, Ed., *The CIO's Left-Led Unions*. Ellen Schrecker credits the state because it "legitimated the efforts of other groups" and because of its vast powers. *See*, Ellen Schrecker, "McCarthyism and the Labor Movement: The Role of the State," in Rosswurm, Ed., *The CIO's Left-Led Unions*, p. 139.

[34]For further discussion of Catholic social doctrine, see Douglas P. Seaton, *Catholics and Radicals: The Association of Catholic Trade Unionists and the American Labor Movement, from Depression to Cold War* (Lewisburg, Pa.: Bucknell University Press, 1981), chap. 2, and Patrick J. McGeever, *Rev. Charles Owen Rice: Apostle of Contradiction* (Pittsburgh: Dusquesne University Press, 1989)

[35]Seaton, *Catholics and Radicals, p. 48.*

[36]"Memorandum - re Catholic Labor Schools," n.d., John J. Ryan Papers, Archives of the Archdiocese of Boston, File 6.

[37]Steve Rosswurm, "The Catholic Church and the Left-Led Unions: Labor Priests, Labor Schools, and the ACTU" in Rosswurm, Ed., *The CIO's Left-Led Unions*.

[38]McGeever, *Rev. Charles Owen Rice*, p. 96.

[39]Seaton, *Catholics and Radicals*, pp. 234, 240.

[40]Neil Betten, *Catholic Activism and the Industrial Worker* (Gainesville: University Presses of Florida, 1976), pp. 149-150; Michael Harrington, "Catholics in the Labor Movement: A Case History," *Labor History* 1 (1960): 231-63.

[41]Ronald W. Schatz, "American Labor and the Catholic Church," *Industrial Labor and Working Class History*, No. 20 (Fall 1981), p. 50. *See also*, Schatz, *The Electrical Workers*.

[42]Levenstein, *Communism, Anticommunism and the CIO;* Schrecker, "McCarthyism and the Labor Movement."

[43]The history of the UE is taken from Schatz, *The Electrical Workers;* Filippelli and McColloch, *Cold War;* Levenstein, *Communism, Anticommunism and the CIO;* Cochran, *Labor and Communism;* James B. Carey, Oral Autobiography [transcript], Oral History Collection of Columbia University.

[44]Filippelli and McColloch, *Cold War*, p. 36.

[45]*New York Times*, August 14, 1938, October 1, 1939; *Congressional Record*, 76th Congress, 3rd Sess., 1940, LXXXVI, Part 1, 582-83, 587, 600 (January 23, 1940)

[46]Filippelli and McColloch, *Cold War*, pp. 50-52.

[47]Carey Oral History, p. 104.

[48]Quoted in Cochran, *Labor and Communism*, p. 151

[49]*Berkshire Evening Eagle*, October 7, 1947.

[50]On the UE-Members for Democratic Action, *see* Seaton, *Catholics and Radicals*, pp. 199-200; Levenstein, *Communists, Anticommunists and the CIO*, pp. 211-213; Schatz, *The Electrical Workers*, 180-181; Filipelli and McColloch, *Cold War*, 91-94.

[51]Levenstein, *Communists, Anticommunists and the CIO*, p. 211.

[52]U.S. Congress, House, Special Subcommittee of the Committee on Education and Labor, "Investigation of Communist Infiltration of UERMWA," 80th Cong., 2nd sess., testimony of James B. Carey (1948).

[53]Quoted in Seaton, *Catholics and Radicals*, p. 198.

[54]*New York Times*, August 12, 1946.

[55]*Springfield Union*, November 7, 1949.

[56]*Springfield Union*, November 18, 1949.

[57]*UE News*, January 8, 1947.

[58]*Saturday Evening Post*, February 22, 1947 and March 1, 1947.

[59]U.S. Congress, House, Committee on Un-American Activities, *Hearings Regarding Communism in Labor Unions in the United States*, 80th Cong., 1st Sess., 1947; Schatz, *The Electrical Workers*, p. 176.

[60]"Resume of Debate on CDA Resolution at District Council #2 Meeting, Providence, Rhode Island, July 19, 1947, United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America Archives (Special Collections, University of Pittsburgh Library) (hereinafter "UE Archives"), UE National Office Files (1975 accession), FF 102.

[61]U.S. Congress, House, Special Subcommittee of the Committee on Education and Labor, "Investigation of Communist Infiltration of UERMWA," 80th Congress, 2nd sess., testimony of James B.Carey.

[62]David Caute, *The Great Fear: The Anti-Communist Purge Under Truman and Eisenhower* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1978), p. 378.

[63]Caute, *Great Fear*, pp. 386-389.

[64]Ibid.

[65]*Massachusetts CIO News*, Vol. IV, No. 10 (October 1947).

[66]Ibid.

[67]*Massachusetts CIO News*, Vol. V, No. 2 (February 1948).

[68]*Massachusetts CIO News*, Vol. V, No. 4 (April 1948).

[69]*Massachusetts CIO News*, Vol. V, No. 7 (July 1948).

[70]Statewide votes on the three referenda were:

| | For | | Against | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| (1) union shop | 443,386 | (29%) | 1,077,642 | (71%) |
| (2) union elections | 558,358 | (37%) | 950,253 | (63%) |
| (3) strike votes | 594,727 | (38%) | 954,153 | (62%) |

Source: *Massachusetts CIO News*, Vol. V, No. 11 (November 1948).

[71]Levenstein, *Anticommunism*, pp. 300-301

[72]Schatz, *Electrical Workers*, pp. 82-83, 88.

[73]"Fifteen Years With 201, August 1933 - August 1948," UE Archives, UENO District Local files, FF 166; Schatz, *Electrical Workers*, p. 85.

[74]F.L. Phelan to Rev. John J. Ryan, August 17, 1937, John J. Ryan Papers, AABo, Folder 2.

[75]Clement O'Brien to Rev. John J. Ryan, November 28, 1938, John J. Ryan Papers, AABo, Folder 1.

[76]"Minutes of ACTU Meeting, March 9, 1939," John J. Ryan Papers, AABo, Folder 1.

[77]Rev. John J. Ryan, "Memorandum - re Catholic Labor Schools," November 11, 1944, John J. Ryan Papers, AABo, Folder 6.

[78]*Boston Pilot*, March 8, 1943.

[79]*Lynn Telegram-News*, June 7, 1943, June 8, 1943; Seaton, *Catholics and Radicals*, p. 89, 147.

[80]Unsigned Memorandum, June 11, 1943, UE Archives, UENO, District Local files, FF 162.

[81]*Lynn Telegram-News*, October 14, 1943; Seaton, *Catholics and Radicals*, pp. 88, 111, 149, 173, 193; "Address to St. Mary's Labor School by Rev. William J. Kelly, O.M.T.," John J. Ryan Papers, AABo

[82]"Memorandum - re Catholic Labor Schools," by Rev. John J. Ryan, November 1944, John J. Ryan Papers, AABo, Folder 6.

[83]John J. Downey to Father Ryan, October 7, 1943, John J. Ryan Papers, AABo, Folder 4.

[84]Undated newsclipping, UE Archives, UENO (1975 Accession), FF 84.

[85]*Lynn Telegram-News*, April 2, 1947.

[86]W.F. Murdock to Earl Riley, March 24, 1947, UE Archives, UE District Records, DD2-L3.

[87]*Boston Globe*, September 26, 1947.

[88]"Memorandum," undated [probably 1950], UE Archives, UENO, District Local files, FF 162.

[89]"Resume of Debate on [MDA] Resolution at District Council #2 Meeting, Providence, Rhode Island, July 19, 1947," UE Archives, UENO (1975 Accession), FF 102.

[90]Ibid.

[91]*Lynn Telegram-News*, Mary 18, 1949.

[92]*Massachusetts CIO News*, Vol. VI, No. 4 (April 1949).

[93]Frederick M. Kelly to Julius Emspak, January 3, 1949, UE Archives, FF 137.

[94]Frederick M. Kelly to Julius Emspak, March 28, 1949, UENO (1975 Accession), FF 137.

[95]*Massachusetts CIO News*, Vol. VI, No. 4 (April 1949)

[96]Ibid.

[97]Ibid.

[98]*Lynn Telegram-News*, May 8, 1949.

[99]*Lynn Telegram-News*, May 17, 1949.

[100]*Lynn Telegram-News*, May 19 and 20, 1949.

[101]Albert J. Fitzgerald to Frederick M. Kelly, June 6, 1949, UE Archives, UENO, FF 133; Frederick M. Kelly to Albert J. Fitzgerald, June 6, 1949, UE Archives, UENO, FF 138.

[102]*Lynn Telegram-News*, June 21, 22, 23, 1949.

[103]"Minutes, Quarterly Meeting, District Council No. 2, October 29, 1949, UE Archives, UENO (1975 accession), FF 11; *Springfield Union*, October 31, 1949; *Lynn Telegram-News*, November 1, 1949.

[104]*Lynn Telegram-News*, November 1 and 14, 1949.

[105]*Lynn Telegram-News*, May 22, 1950.

[106]*Electrical Union News* (Lynn, Mass.), Vol. VIII, No. 33, June 12, 1941.

[107]Frederick M. Kelly to All IUE-CIO Locals, November 17, 1950, IUE Local 206 Papers, Special Collections, W.E.B. DuBois Library, University of Massachusetts at Amherst (hereinafter referred to as IUE Local 206 Papers), Box 5, Folder 51.

[108]June C. Nash, *From Tank Town to High Tech: The Clash of Community and Industrial Cycles* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989), p. 76.

[109]Nash, *Tank Town*, p. 77-81.

[110]James M. Casey to Julius Emspak, December 3, 1943, UE Archives, UENO, FF 613; Filippelli, *Cold War*, p. 73.

[111]McGeever, *Charles Owen Rice*, p. 94, *passim*; Filippelli and McColloch, *Cold War*, pp. 89-90, 92, 132, 134; Schatz, *Electrical Workers*, chap. 8.

[112]Thomas Nolan to Julius Emspak, December 17, 1949, UE Archives, FF 616.

[113]*Berkshire Evening Eagle*, October 7, 1946.

[114]Albert F. Fitzgerald to John Callahan, May 25, 1949, UE Archives, UENO (1975 accession), District 2/D, FF 608.

[115]*Berkshire Eagle*, December 9, 1946.

[116]Francis W. Jacquot to Albert Fitzgerald, December 9, 1946, UE Archives, UENO (1975 Accession), File "Local 255, Correspondence Outgoing, A-J."

[117]"Resume of Debate, District Council #2 meeting, July 19, 1947," UE Archives, UENO (1975 Accession), FF 102.

[118]Nash, *Tank Town*, pp. 98-99; "Resume of Debate, District Council #2 meeting, July 19, 1947, UE Archives, UENO (1975 Accession), FF 102.

[119]John H. Callahan to Albert Fitzgerald, April 2, 1948; UE Archives, FF 609.

[120]Albert J. Fitzgerald to John H. Callahan, October 26, 1948, UE Archives, District Records, DD2-L191.

[121]John H. Callahan to Julius Emspak, December 3, 1948, UE Archives, UENO Records, FF 610.

[122]Rev. Eugene P. Marshall to Parishioner, January 1949, UE Archives, UE District Records, DD2-L196.

[123]John H. Callahan to Paul Seymour, March 24, 1949, UE Archives, UE District Records, DD2-L191.

[124]Edgar Stillman, Jr. to Mrs. Roitman, February 12, 1949, Civil Liberties Union of Massachusetts Collection, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston, Box 8, Folder "Censorship 1949."

[125]*Springfield Union* (West edition), February 25, 1949.

[126]*Massachusetts CIO News*, Vol. VI, No. 3 (March 1949).

[127]*Berkshire Eagle* (Pittsfield, Mass.), May 23, 1949; Albert J. Fitzgerald to John Callahan, May 25, 1949, UE Archives, UENO (1975 Accession), FF 608.

[128]*Berkshire Eagle* (Pittsfield, Mass), June 9 and 13, 1949.

[129]*Berkshire Eagle* (Pittsfield, Mass.), June 13, 1949.

[130]Joseph Dermody to All GE Locals, July 7, 1949, UE Archives, UENO (1975 Accession), FF 10.

[131]"Minutes of District Council No. 2 Meeting, July 8, 1949," UE Archives, UENO (1975 Accession), FF 10; Paul E. Seymour to the *Electric Union News*, July 11, 1949, UE Archives, UE District Records, DD2-L3; *Berkshire Eagle* (Pittsfield, Mass.), July 11, 1949.

[132]Paul Seymour to John Callahan, May 24, 1949, Fiot Betti to Paul Seymour, June 2, 1949, Paul Seymour to John Callahan, June 7, 1949, UE Archives, District Records, DD2-L191.

[133]*Massachusetts CIO News*, Vol. VI, No. 9 (September 1949).

[134]*Berkshire Eagle* (Pittsfield, Mass.), November 1, 1949; *Springfield Union* (West Edition), November 1, 1949.

[135]*Berkshire Eagle* (Pittsfield, Mass.), November 21, 1949.

[136]*Berkshire Eagle* (Pittsfield, Mass.), November 21, 1949; *Springfield Union*, November 21, 1949.

[137]*Berkshire Eagle* (Pittsfield, Mass.), May 10, 1950.

[138]*Berkshire Eagle* (Pittsfield, Mass), May 8 and 9, 1950.

[139]*Berkshire Eagle* (Pittsfield, Mass.), May 22, 1949.

[140]*Berkshire Eagle* (Pittsfield, Mass.), May 25, 1950.

[141]Robert F. Forrant, "Skill Was Never Enough: American Bosch, Local 206 and the Decline of Metalworking in Springfield, Massachusetts, 1900-1970" (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Massachusetts at Amherst, 1994), pp. 12-15.

[142]Schatz, *Electrical Workers*, p. 76.

[143]Filippelli, *Cold War*, pp. 39, 48-49, 52.

[144]Forrant, "Skill Was Never Enough," pp. 124-130.

[145]*Springfield Union*, October 1, 1949.

[146]*Springfield Union*, November 7, 1949.

[147]*Springfield Union*, November 18, 1949.

[148]*Massachusetts CIO News*, Vol. VI, No. 7 (July 1949).

[149]Julius Emspak to All Delegates, UE-CIO, September 1946, IUE Local 206 Papers, Box 6, Folder 66.

[150]Julius Emspak to All Local Unions, November 11, 1946, IUE Local 206 Papers, Box 6, Folder 66.

[151]Julius Emspak to All Locals, April 7, 1947, IUE Local 206 Papers, Box 6, Folder 66.

[152]Julius Emspak to All Locals, February 18, 1947 and March 21, 1947, IUE Local 206 Papers, Box 6, Folder 66.

[153]Ralph Forsstrom to Jack Davis, July 15, 1947, IUE Local 206 Papers, Box 4, Folder 39.

[154]Minutes, Special Executive Board Meeting, September 30, 1948, IUE Local 206 Papers, Box 1, Folder 4.

[155]*Berkshire Eagle* (Pittsfield, Mass.), July 11, 1949.

[156]*Springfield Union*, October 1, 1949.

[157]*Springfield Union*, October 31, November 5, 8, 9, 1949.

[158]*Springfield Union*, November 4, 1949.

[159]Minutes of General Membership Meeting, November 19, 1949, IUE Local 206 Papers, Box 2, Folder 14; *Springfield Union*, November 4, 11, 12, 1949.

[160]*Springfield Union*, November 7, 1949.

[161]*Springfield Union*, November 17, 18, 21, 1949.

[162]*Springfield Union*, November 18, 21, 1949.

[163]*Springfield Union*, January 24, April 28, June 3, 1950.

[164]By-laws, June 2, 1950, IUE Local 206 Papers, Box 1, Folder 2.

[165]*Springfield Union*, November 2, 1949.

[166]*Springfield Union*, May 22, 26, 1950.

[167]*Springfield Union*, April 28, May 18, 20, 25, June 3, 1950.

# CHAPTER 6

# COLD WAR ANTICOMMUNISM

Domestic anticommunism became virulent in the postwar era when the cold war upgraded the Communist party from a national menace to a national enemy. Americans believed party members belonged to an international communist conspiracy plotting to overthrow the government of the United States. When the United States, Canada and England uncovered domestic spies in their midst, Americans began agreeing with conservatives who had been worrying about internal subversion for decades.

Historians continue to debate the primary or principal source of national postwar domestic anticommunism, usually referred to as McCarthyism. Robert Griffith sees McCarthyism as a product of party rivalry; Athan Theoharis argues President Truman needed domestic anticommunism to silence critics and mobilize public support for his foreign policy; Kenneth O'Reilly credits J. Edgar Hoover and the Federal Bureau of Investigation.[1] Whatever the cause, anticommunism became and continues to be a staple of American political culture. This chapter looks at that process through the lens of localism.

In Massachusetts, except for the labor movement, direct consequences of McCarthyism were relatively mild. No one went to jail; a handful of teachers and workers lost their jobs; and draconian laws passed by the legislature were

declared unconstitutional. A noisy state investigating commission parroted charges already made by federal investigating committees. The commission did shut down the Communist party, but failed to silence liberal critics. The relative mildness of McCarthyism in Massachusetts attests to the strength of the liberal lobby.

The same groups of people sponsored anticommunist initiatives during the cold war as had during the depression and war years: rank and file Democrats from Boston, conservative Republicans, Legionnaires, veterans groups, the Catholic Church and professional anticommunists. In that respect, nothing changed over the three decades of this study. However, other manifestations of anticommunism did change. In the early cold war, anticommunist legislators introduced substantially more bills. When national and international events tipped the balance of public opinion in their favor, they succeeded in gaining passage of their bills.

Historian Robert Griffith and others argue that state anticommunist initiatives in the 1950s were "derivative" of national initiatives and that state legislatures "responded almost slavishly to the force of federal law and precedent and to the anxieties aroused by national leaders."[2] This local study of anticommunism in Massachusetts demonstrates how much Griffith overstates the case. Socially conservative Irish Catholics hardly needed to model the federal government; their anticommunism ran generations

deep. In the 1950s, young solons fighting "Reducators" at Harvard and MIT revered South Boston's Tommy Dorgan, a key anticommunist player from the depression era and "father of the teachers' oath," as an elder statesman. In the 1950s, as in the 1930s, liberal Yankees and conservative Irish Bostonians continued to act out a century old morality play. McCarthyism was simply a new context.

## Village McCarthyism

In the postwar period, local anticommunists shut down politically unpopular activities in their neighborhoods. These village McCarthys cast a wide net in their search for subversive people. To them, the Progressive party fronted for the Communist party; books about the Soviet Union tainted libraries; and a party member's basement woodworking shop subverted neighborhood boys. Most of these local anticommunist initiatives occurred in and around Boston before Senator Joseph McCarthy's rise to power. State and local factors, in conjunction with national and international events, spawned postwar anticommunism in Massachusetts. What McCarthy sparked was a revival of far right wing groups.

Individuals worked with local public officials to stop the Communist menace in their neighborhood or town. Boston continued to be the stronghold of local anticommunist sentiment and activism. A 1952 incident involving Otis Hood, Communist party chief in Massachusetts, epitomizes

such attitudes. Hood and his family lived in row house in Boston's Roxbury section. He liked working with his hands and set up a woodworking shop in his basement. On spare evenings and weekends, Hood invited neighborhood boys to the shop and taught them how to use the tools. As they became more proficient, he let them use the shop whenever they wanted. A school teacher who lived with her family in Hood's neighborhood learned about the informal woodworking shop. Knowing who Hood was, she reported it to her school principal who called the FBI and Boston police. It is not clear what happened next; Hood did close his workshop although he said it was because he "lost too many tools." For Tommy Dorgan, unofficial spokesman for Boston's anticommunist crusaders, the school teacher was a local heroine. "Think of the danger [Hood] might have done had not an alert and patriotic school teacher learned of his plan. But for her, the minds of many Roxbury children might be twisted by the poison our enemies are spreading."[3]

In the postwar period, all radical groups were suspect, not just the Communist party. In 1946, the Mayor's office denied permits for the Socialist party to hold political meetings on the Boston Common and Boston police arrested picketers demonstrating in favor of granting amnesty to conscientious objectors.[4] In 1947, Boston City councilmen voted to ask Mayor Curley to shut down a meeting featuring Mrs. Gerhardt Eisler. Eisler was filling in for her husband who had been detained by federal immigration authorities

when he refused to cooperate with HUAC. The meeting took place at the New England Conservatory of Music as scheduled. In Curley's absence, acting Mayor John B. Kelley rejected the City Council's suggestion. Had Curley decided, he may well have sided with the City Council as he would later do in February 1949.[5]

The Civil Liberties Union of Massachusetts (CLUM) lobbied officials at the New England Conservatory of Music on behalf of Mrs. Eisler. Conservatory officials reported to CLUM that "we always work very closely with the FBI when this sort of program comes up and they have requested us to allow these meetings to be held in Brown Hall as they would rather have them here instead of having to look them up in dark allies or back lots."[6] Two years later, the FBI changed tactics. Instead of just observing what it deemed to be Communist party or front activities, it shut them down.

In January 1949, the party's Worker's School postponed its opening when the owner of the hall they had rented revoked the lease. The owner claimed FBI agents pressured him to cancel. When CLUM investigated on behalf of the school, the FBI's Special Agent-in-Charge denied any involvement. There is some evidence that pressure came from a local VFW commander as well.[7] Whatever the source, it became harder and harder for the party and groups on the Attorney General's subversive organizations list to find auditoriums to hold meetings.

In January 1949, the Tremont Temple Baptist Church revoked an agreement to rent its Lorimer Hall to the Civil Rights Congress the night before a scheduled meeting. The church's attorney claimed organizers' failure to disclose CRC was a "communist organization" when applying to use the hall voided the agreement.[8] In May 1949, the Boston YWCA cancelled a contract with the Spanish Refugee Appeal, a group affiliated with the Joint Anti-Fascist Refugee Committee, to use their facilities for a meeting.[9] In August 1950, the manager of Ruggles Hall in Roxbury locked the door on a rally sponsored by the Civil Rights Congress, claiming the police ordered him not to open the doors.[10] In March 1951, the Boston City Council voted to ask the Mayor to prohibit use of a Masonic Temple for a meeting featuring Harry Bridges. Although Acting Mayor Hurley rejected the Council's petition, the owner of the building was too frightened to let Bridges into the hall.[11] In June 1951, the Hotel Bradford cancelled a meeting sponsored by the New Englanders Concerned for Peace.[12]

In November 1951, the Massachusetts legislature passed a bill outlawing the Communist party. One provision of the act made it illegal to rent halls to subversive groups. From this point on, there is no evidence of last minute cancellations, as there had been since 1946, probably because the party and groups close to the party stopped trying to use large public halls. One exception occurred in January 1954. The Boston Freedom of the Press Committee

hired a hall within the Boston Conservatory of Music for a song recital by Albert Alphin. When Conservatory officials learned the Committee was a front for the party's newspaper, *The Daily Worker*, they agreed to let the event take place and announced that the FBI and Boston police would be on hand. American Legion commander, John P. Swift, called out his troops as well. He announced Legionnaires would picket the auditorium bringing search lights to take moving pictures of everyone going in and out of the hall. At that point, Conservatory officers voted to cancel the recital and the Charles Street Meeting House hosted the event.[13]

To many Bay State anticommunists, the Progressive party was synonymous with the Communist party. The Lawrence chief of police denied local Progressive party candidates a permit to operate a sound truck during the 1948 campaign.[14] Boston police arrested Walter O'Brien, state chairman of the Progressive party, as he spoke from a sound truck in 1950.[15] In the summer of 1950, police arrested Arthur Jones and Robert Dubin, state leaders of Young Progressives of America, for picketing at Revere Beach, a popular bathing beach just north of Boston. Jones and Dubin decided to fight their case asserting their right to free speech. When Jones took the stand to testify, the trial judge leaned over the bench and asked: "Are you a Communist?" Jones's lawyer objected on the grounds of relevancy but the judge overruled the objection. When Jones refused to answer the question,

the judge held him in contempt of court. A higher court later reversed the trial court's finding of contempt.[16]

Local anticommunists targeted schools and libraries as well as unpopular political organizing. Again, this activity took place before 1953, the height of McCarthy's power. In 1948, the Lynn school board passed a regulation requiring all teachers to take an oath swearing they were not members of the Communist party. Board member Philip Sisk, a popular young Catholic attorney and veteran, sponsored the regulation. He had won election to the board by a greater margin than any other candidate on the ballot including the Mayor. When the Lynn League of Women Voters, the Public School Association of Lynn and the Lynn Progressive party flooded the board with letters of protest, it agreed to reconsider the issue at the next monthly meeting. Sisk defended the regulation. "Communism isn't a political party or belief," he argued, "it's a world ideology." The school board upheld the regulation by a 5-2 vote.[17]

In Scituate, the school board passed a regulation requiring sponsors of meetings held in school facilities to ensure people with "certain opinions" would not speak. A group of veterans initiated the regulation in response to an event organized by a liberal group, the Scituate Forum, to discuss the situation in Korea. Apparently the veterans felt some of the speakers expressed unpatriotic views. The Scituate Forum organized a delegation of local residents to

meet privately with the school board. They argued the new regulation was too vague. In response, the board prepared a statement for meeting sponsors to sign affirming they "do not individually or as an organization advocate the overthrow of the government by force" and are not "affiliated with any organization that does so advocate."[18]

At the same time as veterans monitored Scituate Forum meetings, veterans in Brookline investigated their public library. In August 1950, Dr. McGrath, a Brookline dentist and head of the Americanism Commission at his local American Legion post, inquired how many copies of *Seeds of Treason* the library held. *Seeds of Treason* was an anticommunist tract about the Alger Hiss case written by Victor Lasky. A young library assistant informed Dr. McGrath that the library's book selection committee rejected the book based on unfavorable reviews such as the one appearing in the *New York Times* describing the book as "biased and prejudiced." Dr. McGrath was incensed. His legion post sent a letter to the library's board of trustees with copies to the press. The incident quickly became a national cause celebre among anticommunist publishers.

The *Chicago Tribune* headlined its story "Library Favors Commie Books in Boston Area; Refuses to Circulate Seeds of Treason." The story described Brookline as "embroiled in cold ideological war."[19] Boston papers reported the library "banned" the book. *Publisher's Weekly* picked up the story

and the American Library Association launched an investigation.

The incident amounted to a tempest in a teapot. The library assistant had given Dr. McGrath inaccurate information. The book committee had merely postponed its decision whether to buy the book in order to review another book on the same subject due out in September. Because of all the publicity, the town librarian herself read both books and recommended both be purchased.[20]

Two years later, the *Boston Post's* new owner, John Fox, picked the Boston Public Library as the first target of his anticommunist crusade. In September 1952, the library urged patrons to inform themselves about communism by mounting a lobby display of materials on the Soviet Union available in the reference section. The *Boston Post* blasted the library for holding "Red literature" that set off a chain reaction among anticommunists. The Boston City Council summoned the library's trustees to appear in council chambers to explain their policy; the American Legion voted to ban all pro-Soviet materials at the library; and Boston's Catholic newspaper questioned whether the library was adequately "supervising" patrons who requested the material. In the midst of all this scrutiny, the library's board of trustees voted three to two to maintain the present policy. Patrick McDonald, a steel merchant and president of the Council of National Catholic Laymen's Societies, and Judge Frank J. Donahue cast the two dissenting votes.[21]

As controversy over the Boston Public Library mounted, anticommunists in Cambridge rushed to investigate their library's holdings. They found that the Cambridge library had been banning all "Communist tinged material" for the past ten years and that the seven member board of trustees and town librarian were in complete agreement about the policy.

The FBI played a shadowy role throughout this early period of cold war anticommunism. Its presence in Boston pressuring building owners not to rent facilities to radical groups has already been noted. There is some evidence that the FBI were active in other parts of the state as well. In January 1947, Worcester's mayor, Charles Sullivan confided in library director Philip Morgan that he was suspicious of Thurston Taylor, one of Morgan's librarians. In 1944, Taylor gained some notoriety when he prepared a book list on the Soviet Union, then an ally of the United States. In 1945, the Communist party invited Taylor to bring a book display on the Soviet Union to one of its meetings, which he did. Two years later, Mayor Sullivan told Taylor's boss he thought Taylor was a subversive and should be investigated. The library director agreed with the Mayor's assessment but heard nothing further. A year later, in 1948, charges concerning Taylor's loyalty resurfaced in the *Catholic Messenger*, the weekly newspaper of the Worcester Archdiocese. When the *Messenger's* editor refused to reveal his sources, the Worcester city council decided it better

investigate. They asked Mayor Sullivan for information but he referred them to the "original sources." In December 1948, Taylor appeared before the council and was questioned by Democratic aldermen George Wells and Harry McGrath. After hearing Taylor, and with no substantiation of the charges, the council gave Taylor a unanimous vote of confidence.[22]

Around this same time, FBI activity was also reported in Ashby, a small town north of Worcester on the New Hampshire border. Dorothy Wilder, a local schoolteacher, subscribed to the *Nation*, *World Events*, the *Guardian*, and the *Call*. Wilder belonged to the Socialist party but was not current with her dues, and had donated money to the Progressive party in 1948. When the FBI sent Ashby's chief of police a list of local communists, he reported to Wilder that her name was the first one. Wilder was furious. "Does [my choice of reading material] make me an FBI Communist? We ought to challenge such irresponsible charges of village McCarthys."[23]

Rumors about FBI lists circulated in other communities as well. In June 1950, the Cambridge city council decided to investigate the loyalty of everyone living and working in Cambridge. The council instructed the city manager to have the chief of police obtain the FBI's list of Cambridge Communists. But the FBI demurred, replying that their lists were confidential and had never been disclosed. Undeterred, Cambridge anticommunists turned to other sources. Police

chief John King had already compiled a list of more than 100 people based on information from the American Legion and twenty citizen informants. The list included a minister, two Harvard professors, and a prominent attorney. King said everyone on the list was "in the upper social strata. Not a single common worker is mentioned."[24] City councilman John Lynch asked for funds to reprint the pamphlet "Reducators at Harvard University" sent to him by Robert Donner of Colorado Springs. In 1951, Lynch sponsored a resolution calling for the purge of 50 suspected "Reds" at Harvard including President Conant and historian Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. As it had in the 1930s, Cambridge's cultural struggle between working class residents and Harvard's elite spilled over into local politics.

Another shadowy source of local anticommunist initiatives is what historian Ellen Schrecker characterizes as a "wide-ranging anti-Communist network" whose members "came into their own during the McCarthy period, staffing the main organizations in the field and imposing their agenda on the rest of the nation."[25] Well known figures associated with this network spoke in Boston on several occasion. In 1947, Joseph R. Matthews, HUAC's former research director, testified at a state legislative hearing as an expert on domestic Communism. He spoke at length about communists at Harvard. Cambridge Mayor Michael Neville introduced Matthews to the committee.[26] Matthews returned to Boston in 1954 to participate in an "anti-

subversive seminar" sponsored by the American Legion. Another network speaker at the seminar was Bella Dodd, a former Communist party member in New York and one of a coterie of professional witnesses.[27]

In 1953, Louis Budenz gave an "educational talk" to the newly formed state commission investigating communism and subversion in the commonwealth. Budenz, a former editor of the *Daily Worker*, made countless appearances at trials and before federal and state investigating committees. The Massachusetts commission asked him for advice on how to "ferret out hidden communists."[28]

When Budenz renounced the evils of "godless Communism," he returned to the folds of the Catholic Church. Boston's Archbishop Cushing embraced Budenz's return to the Catholic faith. When Budenz came to Boston in 1953 to testify before the state investigating commission, Cushing announced he would ask Budenz to help him form "anticommunist cells" in Boston.[29] Cushing called on Budenz again in 1959 to help him write a pamphlet for high school students outlining "Nine Rules For Fighting Communism." According to Cushing, he and Budenz also collaborated on a college level textbook to expose the dangers of communism.[30] There is no evidence that these plans came to fruition.

Later in 1959, Cushing ran into problems when he hastily put together a series titled "Questions and Answers on Communism" that ran in the *Boston American*, a Hearst publication. The series was timed to coincide with Soviet

Premier Nikita Khruchev's visit to the United States. Cushing relied on priests in the Archdiocesan office to research and write the series. They relied on familiar sources from the anticommunist network that smeared liberal groups like the American Civil Liberties Union and that were very anti-Semitic. One Cushing article criticized "international bankers" and recommended Catholics read the *American Mercury*, a anti-Semitic publication that claimed the Jewish religion was un-American. Cushing apologized profusely to Jewish and liberal leaders, taking responsibility for not reviewing the articles more closely.[31] The incident shows how connected local activist priests were to the national anticommunist network.

Another older network promoted local McCarthyism as well. This grouping consisted of anti-Semitic ultra conservatives, including some who had been active since the 1930s. During the 1954 election campaign, as criticism of McCarthy mounted nationally, these local conservative zealots rushed to his defense. A group calling itself Democrats for American Action, a parody on the liberal group Americans for Democratic Action, sent a flier to selected Massachusetts Democrats. "On Guard!" it warned. "Keep Senator McCarthy on the job... The ADA and its favorite son Adlai Stevenson are enemies of Senator McCarthy... We are enrolled Democrats who do not want our party captive of the ADA, the welfare staters, pinks and phony liberals." Another group, Citizens for McCarthy, organized by the same

people, sponsored a pro-McCarthy rally featuring HUAC counsel Roy Cohn and Rabbi Benjamin Schultz as speakers. The crowd filled Boston's Fanueil Hall and wildly cheered a proposal to hold a bigger pro-McCarthy rally in the Boston Garden.[32]

Mrs. John Beaumont of Cambridge, vice president of Citizens for McCarthy, belonged to the National Council for American Education, a group founded by Allen Zoll. Zoll also founded the American Patriots, an anti-Semitic group that featured speaking tours for Gerald L.K. Smith, Elizabeth Dilling, and leaders of the Bundt. In 1947, when the Attorney General put Zoll's group on the subversive list, he founded the National Council. In 1949, the National Council published the pamphlet "Reducators at Harvard University." Bernard McCabe, secretary-treasurer of Citizens for McCarthy, founded America First of Massachusetts in 1954. Other officers of America First were former Coughlinites.[33]

## McCarthyism in the State House

Anticommunist initiatives resurfaced in the Massachusetts legislature after the crisis of World War II passed. Between 1947 and 1962, legislators introduced over 70 bills, resolves and resolutions to thwart the perceived communist threat in Massachusetts. Rank and file urban Democrats sponsored ninety percent of these initiatives. A coterie of Boston Democrats from heavily Irish wards

introduced two-thirds of the bills. The wards they represented included all income levels. Wards 6, 7 and 10/11 were predominantly low-income Irish; Wards 16 and 17 were predominantly middle-income Irish; and Ward 20 was the only high-income Irish ward in Boston. Anticommunism was common ground for Boston's Irish Democrats. Only one of Boston's two Italian wards elected representatives who joined the anticommunist activists. It was Ward 3 where a mix of Italians and newer immigrants from Eastern Europe lived. The latter supported their representatives' anticommunist bills much more enthusiastically than the former.[34]

Democrats from Cambridge, Somerville, Worcester, New Bedford and Fitchburg introduced one-quarter of the anticommunist bills. The Cambridge and Somerville legislators, like their Boston counterparts, represented predominantly Irish constituencies. The Cambridge city council was as active as Cambridge's state representatives in promoting anticommunist initiatives. FBI informants named Worcester, Fitchburg and New Bedford as strongholds of communist labor organizers. When the media focused statewide attention on a particular area, local anticommunist officials jumped into the spotlight by sponsoring bills to meet the perceived danger. A small group of conservative, suburban Republican legislators introduced the remaining ten percent of the anticommunist bills and resolves.

Anticommunist legislators sponsored bills and resolves to expose communists; keep communists out of schools, public office and public jobs; and shut down the Communist party. One-third of the bills and resolves concerned state investigating commissions--establishing them, continuing them, or expanding their powers. One-quarter of the bills concerned education--firing teachers who were members of the Communist party, firing teachers who took the 5th Amendment, increasing the penalty for violating the 1935 teachers' oath law, and taxing schools that refused to fire communists. Anticommunist legislators did not always agree on the best strategy. One education bill would have forbidden the teaching of "atheistic Communism" while two education bills would have required it. Twenty percent of the bills aimed at keeping communists and fellow travelers out of public office and public jobs. One of these bills would have required all *candidates* to file a non-Communist oath; another would have required all *voters* to file a non-Communist oath. Only ten percent of the bills aimed to outlaw the Communist party or prevent it from organizing publicly.

These postwar bills and resolves did not represent new concerns to Massachusetts legislators. Irish Democrats and conservative Republicans had sponsored similar bills and resolves during the depression. Two had been enacted: the 1935 teacher's oath law and the 1937 Special Commission to

Investigate Subversive Activities in the Commonwealth. What was different was the increased number of bills introduced.

Democratic party leaders did not share the same enthusiasm for these anticommunist initiatives. Of all the bills introduced by rank and file Democrats, none was enacted. In Massachusetts, a bill or resolve does not become law unless it is supported by party leadership. Most bills were never reported out of committee; others were reported out with the recommendation that they ought not be adopted or that they be referred to the next session. From the mid-1950s on, most of the anticommunist bills were simply referred to the state investigating commission for further study. Boston Democrats did succeed in winning passage of their resolves to establish special investigating commissions, although party leaders insisted on procedural safeguards and limited powers. Both commissions came at times of intense national pressure--the first when U.S. troops were fighting communists in Korea and the second when three federal investigating committees focused a blaze of national media attention on alleged communists at Harvard, MIT and Boston public schools. The first commission met over the winter of 1950-51 but was not revived during the next term. The second commission lasted for ten years, from 1953 to 1963.

The legislature did pass three significant anticommunist bills in 1948, 1949 and 1951, all before the full gale force of McCarthyism hit the state or the nation.

Republicans sponsored two of these bills and the first investigating commission sponsored one. The first law dealt with communist teachers, the second with communists holding public office, and the third outlawed the Communist party. The last, a sweeping measure, was modeled after Maryland's Ober Act.

Barnes Bill, 1948

Rep. Kendall A. Sanderson, a conservative Republican, sponsored this bill on behalf of Attorney General Clarence A. Barnes. The proposed law aimed to ban teachers at public and private educational institutions suspected of being communists or teaching communist doctrine. Sanderson, a lawyer, lived in Marblehead, a wealthy Yankee seaside resort town sandwiched between two industrialized, immigrant towns, Lynn and Peabody. In 1946 and 1947, Sanderson strongly supported three very regressive bills designed to cripple unions. When the antilabor bills failed to pass in the legislature, Sanderson and his allies in the Chamber of Commerce brought them directly to the voters by referendum. All three measures were soundly defeated in 1948.

Clarence A. Barnes, the Massachusetts Attorney General, initiated the bill. Barnes was also a lawyer and a conservative Republican. At a hearing before the Committee on Education, Barnes said the bill was only a first step. To stop subversion in the commonwealth, he argued "Communists must be driven underground." Barnes acted from

his own prejudices, not from any factual basis of concern. When asked at the hearing why laws already on the books were not sufficient to protect students from communist subversion, Barnes replied that he had never tried to enforce them. When pressed further, Barnes admitted that nothing had ever come up to even spark an investigation. The American Legion and Veterans of Foreign Wars also testified in favor of the bill. A host of prominent educators, led by President Conant of Harvard, opposed the bill.[35]

The Committee on Education rejected the original Barnes bill. In its place, the committee sent out two milder amendments to existing laws: one prohibited persons convicted of violating the 1919 state sedition law from teaching and the other imposed $1,000 fine for violating the 1935 teachers' oath law. When the bill reached the floor of the House, Edmond J. Donlan, dean of the Boston anticommunists in the House, proposed an amendment mandating the Department of Education to publish a monthly bulletin "naming teachers who are teaching treasonous, subversive or seditious doctrine or using books that do." The House rejected the Donlan amendment and the original Barnes bill, and passed, along with the Senate, the Education Committee's amendments.[36] The Civil Liberties Union of Massachusetts breathed a collective sigh of relief. "CLUM ... felt that the amendments were mild in character in contrast to the

original Bill which could have wrecked freedom in educational institutions."[37]

The Barnes bill was one of seven anticommunist bills introduced in the 1948 legislative session. Various Boston Democrats sponsored all the rest. Five of the six were either withdrawn by their sponsors or referred to the next session. Only one, a bill to establish a special commission to investigate communists and other subversive groups, made it to the House floor. A similar bill had been introduced the year before but had died in committee. A triumvirate of Boston Democrats, John F. Collins from Ward 11, William J. Fitzsimmons from Ward 16, and Gabriel Francis Piemonte from Ward 3, sponsored these bills. At a hearing in 1947, Collins, who would become Mayor of Boston in 1958, told the Committee on Constitutional Law that "Communism in America today is a festering sore gnawing away at the vitals of our American way of life."[38] The Committee also heard from Joseph R. Matthews, former research director of HUAC, who testified as an "expert on Communism." Matthews told the Committee that Harvard was one of three national universities whose professors had the "most significant record of supporting Communist fronts." He singled out Harvard geology professor Kirtley F. Mather and MIT mathematician Dirk Struik as prime examples of his charge.[39]

In 1948, an even larger group of anticommunist proponents testified before the Committee on Constitutional Law in favor of the resolve to establish a state

investigating committee. Ten Boston Democrats appeared for the bill along with Tommy Dorgan, "father of the 1935 teachers' oath" and now Clerk of the Probate Court in Suffolk County. Other witness included representatives from the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, American Veterans and the Boston Civic League. The Committee, however, was unwilling to endorse a probe of communists in the state and voted ten to four to refer the bill to the next session. The House concurred.[40]

Why did the 1948 legislature pass the Barnes bill but not the Collins/Fitzsimmons/Piemonte bill? One reason is because Republicans favored it. To get an anticommunist initiative just out of committee, it had to be supported by Republicans as well as Democrats. Democrats, it seems, supported Republican anticommunist initiatives but Republicans did not support Democratic ones. Perhaps Republican animosity toward Boston Democrats overrode shared concern about substantive issues. The Barnes bill was much less sweeping in scope as well. Even the Civil Liberties Union could live with it. Thus, the Barnes bill was an easy way for legislators to placate media critics and fend off the call for a state investigating commission.

Sanderson Bill, 1949

Kendall Sanderson returned in 1949 with a bill to prohibit members of the Communist party and other subversive organizations from holding public office. The bill

languished in the Committee on Public Service for five months, a sure sign that party leaders wanted to kill the bill. In early June, the Committee brought it to the House floor with the recommendation that it be referred to the next session. The House rejected the Committee's recommendation and passed an amended version of the bill, proposed by Charles W. Hedges, a Republican from Quincy, that added a provision requiring all public servants to take an oath promising to defend the Constitution and oppose the overthrow of state or federal government. There were no recorded votes on the House amendments.[41]

Senate Democrats tried to amend the Sanderson bill to require registration of communists, but failed. Senate Republicans tried to amend the Sanderson bill by striking out the words "a member of the communist party." Had the amendment passed, the law would have applied only to "members of an organization that advocate the overthrow of the government by force or violence."[42] The distinction would have preserved first amendment rights of Communist party members, at least until it was determined to be a subversive organization. This amendment failed too and the bill passed by a narrow margin of 23 to 17.

The House considered two other bills introduced by Boston Democrats in 1949. Both failed. Ralph Sullivan, from Boston's Ward 17, proposed a bill to "prevent teaching of atheistic communism and safeguard Christian ideals in American education." The bill passed the house but died in

the Senate.[43] Sullivan worried about the threat communism posed to religion and community values. Vincent Mannering, from Boston's Ward 10, worried about the political threat of communism. He proposed legislation to outlaw the Communist party as a political party and to require registration of party members. Although party leaders succeeded in keeping Mannering's bill bottled up in committee, the proposal to outlaw the Communist party did not go away.[44]

In 1949, as in 1948, one difference between the bill that passed and bills that did not pass was party affiliation of the sponsors. Kendall Sanderson was the key Republican legislator promoting anticommunist initiatives in the House both years. He must have had some support from Republican party leaders to get these two bills through the House. Sanderson's bill also came on the heels of the federal government's exposure of communists in public employment. Since passage of President Truman's Federal Loyalty Program, the FBI uncovered people it claimed were Communists working for the federal government in the Bay State.

Whatever the truth of the charges, these people were harmless souls, caught in the anticommunist cross fire of national politics. John Galardi, a fifty year old machinist, worked at the Boston Navy Yard. At a hearing before the Civil Service Commission, he admitted subscribing to the *Daily Worker* but denied belonging to the Communist party. The Commission and Loyalty Review Board rejected

Galardi's denial and fired him.[45] The Boston Navy Yard fired Leon Galandzy because belonged to a faction within the Ukrainian Association that supported the Soviet Union. Galandzy denied the charge and exposed the government's source as the disgruntled wife of his arch-rival within the association.[46] The FBI also investigated Frank Baker, a mail carrier from Brockton in the summer of 1948. Frank was an eccentric character who threw himself into organizing for a series of left wing religious groups.[47] The federal government fired another postal employee, William Eubanks of Cambridge, after 25 years of service because he belonged to the N.A.A.C.P., subscribed to the *Nation*, and attended a Scott Nearing lecture and a Paul Robeson concert. He also bought copies of the *Daily Worker* "from a persistent girl" because it was easier than saying no.[48]

Other, more dramatic evidence of communist infiltration in Massachusetts helped generate support for the Sanderson bill as well. In April 1949, Herbert Philbrick, a member of the Communist party in Massachusetts, stunned the Bay State, as well as the nation, when he surfaced as an FBI informant and testified in New York City against top CP leaders. Philbrick exposed a small group of college professors and professionals that comprised a party cell in the Boston area. His biggest fish was Professor Dirk Struik of MIT. Philbrick's testimony helped build a stronger anticommunist climate in Massachusetts, especially in the Boston area.

Committee to Curb Communism, 1950-51

In 1950, Boston Democrats submitted two petitions for resolves to establish special investigating committees. Reverberations from Philbrick's revelations and the outbreak of war in Korea pushed the legislature to adopt one. It was a messy fight with rank and file anticommunist legislators pitted against party leaders, the governor's office and influential liberal lobbying groups. As one participant later recalled, "[the committee] was born in a storm of controversy."[49] The fighting, however, took place outside public view; once it came time for a roll call vote, the measure carried by an impressive 91 percent.

Bernard Lally, representing Boston's Ward 17, introduced the first petition in January. It called for appointment of a special commission to "investigate the infiltration of communist doctrine into teaching systems and persons sympathetic to such doctrines." The Committee on Constitutional Law promptly reported the petition out, recommending that it be referred to the next session. Once the Lally petition reached the floor of the House, however, legislators jumped to support it. Clarence Telford, a Republican from Plainville, a small town in the Berkshires, moved to increase the scope of the commission to "all communistic activities in the commonwealth." Legislators adopted this amendment by a lopsided vote of 95 to 35 and sent the petition to the Joint Rules Committee. Here,

however, party leaders exerted more influence and the petition died in committee.[50]

In early February, Donlan, who represented Boston's wealthiest Irish ward, introduced the second petition to establish an investigation committee. His Order called for a special committee to investigate the Communist party and communist-front activities in the commonwealth. The petition languished in committee until July. A month after North Koreans crossed the 38th parallel, prompting President Truman to order U.S. air and naval units into action, committee members voted nine to six to send the Donlan Order to the floor of the House. Seizing the moment, Donlan immediately moved to suspend the rules and begin debate. Both Democrats and Republicans rushed in to help shape the legislation. Sherman Miles, a Republican from the Boston's Yankee Ward 5, wanted the committee to investigate groups "which are actively engaged in communist indoctrination or in propaganda against the military efforts of the United States in support of the United Nations." Charles Hedges, a Republican from Quincy, offered an amendment to have the committee investigate individuals as well as groups. Joseph Ward, a Democrat from Fitchburg, moved to give the committee $100,000 to conduct their investigation.[51]

While these and other amendments were being debated, Democratic and Republican party leaders tried to derail the legislation. Democratic floor leader Robert Murphy argued to his colleagues that the FBI was much better suited to

handle this kind of investigation and urged them not to open up this can of worms. Republican floor leader Charles Gibbons tried various parliamentary maneuvers to suspend consideration of the petition, and finally succeeded in getting the bill referred to the committee on Ways and Means. At 7 p.m., the House recessed without having voted on the measure.[52]

The next afternoon, the committee on Ways and Means reported the Donlan Order out of committee with the recommendation that the $100,000 appropriation be stricken. With no further debate, legislators adopted the committee's amendment and Order by a vote of 190 to 19. The party leadership had lost their battle and they knew it. Only twelve Republicans and seven Democrats went on record in opposition to the Committee to Curb Communism.[53]

Vigorous opposition from the liberal lobby made legislators wary enough to include procedural safeguards in the legislation. The committee was required to tell witnesses the subject of their investigation and to seek only evidence "relevant and germane" to the subject. Witnesses had the right to counsel and the right to supplement their testimony with a statement that would be made part of the record. People named in committee hearings had the right to file statements or appear before the committee. The House version of the Order required a stenographic record of all testimony, but the Senate struck this provision.[54]

The Speaker of the House and the President of the Senate appointed four Republicans and four Democrats to the committee. Philip Bowker, a Republican Senator from Brookline, became chairman of the committee. A career politician, Bowker served in the House from 1933 to 1940 before being elected to the Senate. When not performing his legislative duties, Bowker sold voting equipment for the Automatic Voting Machine Corporation. Bowker quickly assured liberal critics that the committee would not engage in "witch hunting."[55] Donlan, the Order's sponsor and the only other Boston legislator named to the committee was the only member publicly identified as an anticommunist crusader. The committee hired William Costello, a former FBI agent, as its counsel and went to work.

The committee's first order of business was to send a delegation to Washington, D.C. to gather information. Representatives Donlan, Michael Batal, a Democrat from Lawrence, and Edward DeSaulnier, a Republican from Chelmsford, spent three days in Washington where they met with the officials from the U.S. Attorney General's office, the FBI, and HUAC. According to Donlan, they returned to Boston with "a whole suitcase of material."[56]

The committee began meeting in January, 1951 and issued its report on March 30, 1951. It was a cautious committee, wary of being in the spotlight. Cornelius Dalton, a conservative political columnist, blasted the committee for "letting themselves be frightened by the letterhead

liberals."[57] The committee held no public hearings and heard all witnesses in executive session. It summoned leaders of the Communist party but all invoked their privilege against self-incrimination. The committee complained it was hampered by a lack of information. Since no state body compiled information about local communist activity, the committee depended on whatever information the FBI and HUAC were willing to share.[58] Thus, the committee had no startling new information to disclose in its report.

The committee reported the Communist party in Massachusetts had approximately 900 members concentrated in Boston, a cluster of industrial towns north of Boston (Lynn, Peabody and Salem), and the twin textile cities of New Bedford and Fall River. It concluded the Communist party was "not a legitimate political party, nor [was] it a movement whose goal is Socialism or some modification of our present political system." The report named ten top leaders of the party, giving brief biographical sketches of each one, and concluded that the party had gone underground.[59]

The report focused its fire on two communist front groups, the Professional Club of Boston and the "Peace Front," groups Philbrick exposed two years earlier in his testimony at the New York Smith Act trial. According to the report, the Professional Club was "the most important section of the Communist party in Massachusetts" because its members were "instrumental in carrying out a program of psychological and intellectual sabotage." Drawing on a

favorite local metaphor that places Boston at the "hub" of the nation, the committee described the Boston Professional Club as a "focal point from which Communist influence in our cultural community radiates throughout the nation ... influencing or duping others in positions of influence." The committee described this phenomenon as a "matter of great concern."[60]

The committee also blasted the "Peace Front" in Boston, the "intellectual and psychological sabotage campaign of the Communist's Fifth Column." Peace Front propaganda "softened the American people" making them unsympathetic to national defense efforts in Europe and Far East. It aimed to create public opinion favoring withdrawal of troops in Europe and South Korea. According to the committee, this was not a legitimate peace initiative but a ruse to pave the way for a Communist takeover.[61]

The committee did not investigate communism in labor or industry, probably because the FBI and HUAC did not give it any information in these areas. It did note the "comparative ineffectiveness of the Communist drive in the textile industry" and claimed it needed more time to examine communist infiltration in the United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers Union of America (UE) and the Union of Office and Professional Workers of America (UOPWA). As for probing communist subversion in the defense industry, the committee said the FBI was better qualified to carry out that work.[62]

Massachusetts "Ober" Act, 1952

The Committee to Curb Communism proposed sweeping legislation to deal with the menace of communist subversion in Massachusetts. At the heart of the bill was a provision, similar to Maryland's Ober Act, outlawing the Communist party.[63] Other provisions established a special subversive activities division in the attorney general's office; beefed up the already existing Barnes bill and Sanderson bill; and proposed a loyalty oath for attorneys. The committee also recommended that it be continued for another year.[64]

These recommendations were not unanimous. Two Republicans and one Democrat filed dissenting reports. William Hayes, a Republican lawyer from Waltham, believed the pressing need was not new legislation "but a well-informed public." Federal laws, he argued, were sufficient to deal with subversive activity in the state. Hayes also disagreed with singling out lawyers. Sumner Whittier, a Republican patrician from Everett, one of the hotbeds of communist activity according to the report, and Donlan felt it was too soon to pass an Ober Act type law while its central premise was still being tested in the courts.[65]

The crucial legal issue was whether the first amendment protected the Communist party. If it was a political party, like the Democratic Party or the Republican Party, then its members were entitled to constitutional protection; but, if it was a dangerous conspiracy, then government was free to

act. In 1951, after the committee filed its report, the Supreme Court settled the issue by upholding convictions of top Communist party leaders in *United States v. Dennis*.[66] Citing world events, the Court found that the CP met the "clear and present danger" test. It also relied on the fact that the CP was an organized political party. "It is the existence of the conspiracy which creates the danger," wrote Chief Justice Vinson. Once the Supreme Court ruled, the door opened for federal and state governments to curtail speech and associational rights of communists.

The committee filed its report and recommendations for legislation on April 2, 1951. Party leaders again tried and failed to derail the bills. Both the House and the Senate rejected proposals to have the Committee on Constitutional Law consider the bills during recess. Donlan, apparently still concerned about the constitutionality of the bill, moved to substitute it with an order to revive the committee. The House rejected Donlan's amendment and passed the committee's legislation by a vote of 201 to 17. The bill stalled in the Senate until Senator Silvio Conte, a liberal Republican from western Massachusetts, proposed a substitute. Conte's bill trimmed back the worst excesses of the committee bill but retained its central provision outlawing membership in the Communist party. On November 16, 1951, the last day the legislature sat, the Senate passed Conte's bill.[67]

The new law attacked the Communist party head on. It defined subversive organizations as "any form of association of three or more persons ... established ... for the common purpose of advocating, advising ... [the] overthrow by force or violence ... [of] the government..," and declared them illegal. The law specifically named the Communist party as a subversive organization and set up a mechanism for state courts to determine whether other groups were subversive. People who remained members of a subversive organization faced three years in jail and a $1,000 fine. Anyone who destroyed books or records of a subversive organization faced one year in jail and a fine of $1,000. Renting a hall to a subversive organization carried a maximum penalty of one year in jail and a fine of $1,000.[68]

The same day the Senate passed this sweeping bill, it rejected another bill that had already made it through the House. The other bill was brought on behalf of Boston's Tommy Dorgan, sponsor of the 1935 teachers' oath. Dorgan's petition instructed college presidents at public and private institutions to expel communists and communist sympathizers from their teaching staffs. The bill remained bottled up in committee until October, 1951 when it reached the House floor and quickly passed without a voice vote. The Senate, however, rejected the Dorgan bill just moments after it passed the Committee to Curb Communism's legislation.[69]

This suggests that in the Senate, at least, the liberal lobby still had some clout. It also suggests that the

Communist party had become an easy target for legislators warily looking over their shoulders at bad press. When it came to private education, however, Harvard and other elite universities in the state were still off limits. But not for the House. As Donlan said, "President Conant gives aid and comfort to the enemy when he leaves the impression that Communism is just an 'unpopular political opinion.'"[70]

The commonwealth brought only two indictments pursuant to the new law: the first in 1951 against Professor Dirk Struik of MIT and the second in 1954 against the Otis Hood and seven Communist party leaders in Massachusetts. Both indictments were dismissed in 1956 when the Supreme Court ruled the federal government had preempted the field of sedition.

Although the legislature passed this sweeping law proposed by the Committee to Curb Communism in 1951, it did not agree to revive and continue the committee the next year. Boston Democrat Timothy McInerney introduced a petition to reestablish the committee, but it died in committee.[71] Boston Democrat William Keenan introduced the only other anticommunist initiative in 1952. His bill would require college presidents to fire communists and communist sympathizers. When the Committee on Education recommended it be referred to the next session, the House quietly acquiesced.[72] Without the pressure of being at war with communist North Korea and China, party leaders succeeded in containing localist anticommunist sentiment.

Massachusetts Special Commission On Communism, Subversive Activities and Related Matters Within the Commonwealth, 1953-1963

In 1953, however, the tide turned once again and the legislature launched a new commission. This time outside pressure came from congressional investigating committees. In the first half of 1953, the Velde Committee (HUAC), Jenner Committee (SISS) and McCarthy Subcommittee all held hearings in Boston. The Velde and Jenner committees focused on "subversion in higher education" and competed with each other to land the most prestigious witnesses and make the most sensational charges. Beginning in February 1953, Robert Gorham Davis, Granville Hicks and Daniel Boorstin gave dramatic testimony to HUAC about Communist party activities at Harvard in the 1930s. Another ten witnesses also testified, about half cooperated with the committee. Witnesses who refused to name names in executive session were called back to testify at public hearings so that they could be "exposed." Wendell Furry was the only uncooperative witness still teaching at Harvard in 1953. Anticommunists inside and outside the university called for Furry's dismissal. After much maneuvering, the Harvard Corporation suspended Furry for three years rather than firing him outright.[73]

In March, 1953, the Jenner Committee (SISS) began hearings in Boston on the same issue. Two more Harvard teachers, Helen Deane Markham and Leon Kamin, took the

Fifth. Again, the Harvard Corporation did not fire them outright, angering federal inquisitors and local anticommunists alike. A week after Harvard's announcement suspending Markham and Kamin, the Jenner committee called Markham back for further testimony. When she continued to assert her fifth amendment privilege, Jenner called Herbert Philbrick to "prove" she was a Communist. All Philbrick could do, however, was repeat hearsay information from someone he "believed to be a Communist party member" who had told him Markham was a member of the party.[74]

Other, less famous Massachusetts educators also refused to cooperate with the Jenner committee. Since the state employed these teachers, however, they were fired as soon as they asserted their privilege against self-incrimination. One was George Faxon, a Boston high school teacher and a target of local anticommunists since 1939 when he organized a meeting for the American Student Union. Elizabeth Guarnaccia, another teacher who took the Fifth before the Jenner committee, resigned before she was fired. Mary Knowles, the Norwood town librarian, also resigned following her appearance before the Jenner committee.[75]

The legislature reacted to this spotlight of national publicity by establishing its own investigating commission. Boston Democrats, James Burke, Edmond Donlan and John McMorrow, and Cambridge Democrat, Francis Good introduced three different bills in 1953. Good was fulfilling his campaign pledge to fight subversion. An advertisement he

ran in the 1952 campaign assured voters a vote for him would "Aid In The Fight Against Communism"[76] In May, Senate and House leaders appointed a committee to consolidate the bills into one. This committee included Senator Bowker, former chairman of the Committee to Curb Communism, Senator John Powers, a Boston Democrat, and Representative Paul Mccarthy from Somerville. All three would be appointed to the new commission. Bowker assured his colleagues the committee would draft a resolve creating "the broadest type of investigation we have ever had in the Commonwealth." Projected targets were "communist infiltration in religion, education, legal profession and labor."[77]

This committee drafted a resolve broader in scope than that the 1950 Committee to Curb Communism. They modeled this new investigating commission after that of the House Un-American Activities Committee, copying language directly from the federal legislation to define the scope of the state's investigation. Unlike HUAC, however, they included safeguards similar to those adopted for the Committee to Curb Communism. The resolve was introduced in the Senate in late June, 1953, and flew through both chambers in less than ten days without one word of opposition.[78]

Members of the Massachusetts Special Commission on Communism, Subversive Activities and Other Related Matters met for the first time on September 15, 1953. Although dependent on the legislature for renewal each year and for funds to conduct investigations, the special commission

quickly took on a life of its own. Before examining the workings and impact of the commission, we will look at the legislature's response to the special commission.

1954 and 1955 were the high water mark of number of anticommunist bills and petitions introduced in the legislature. As in the past, Boston Democrats sponsored most. Democrats from Worcester, Fitchburg, Lawrence and New Bedford also introduced anticommunist bills. Many overlapped; many copied previous bills; some proposed to increase penalties of existing legislation; and none was enacted. With the exception of legislation dealing specifically with the special commission, the legislature passed no new anticommunist initiatives after 1953. Most bills never made it out of committee; many were referred to the special commission for further study.

The first change in the mission of the special commission came a year after it began meeting. Angered by a watered down, generalized first report, Joseph Ward, a Fitchburg Democrat, proposed an amendment mandating the special commission to name names. On a voice vote, the House voted Ward's amendment down, 42 to 69. But, when Ward called for a roll call vote, his amendment passed by a vote of 114 to 69. Clearly, lawmakers had some misgivings about the new investigating commission, including its chairman, Philip Bowker, who moved to strike Ward's amendment. The House revised the language of Ward's amendment, calling for the commission to name names when it had "credible evidence"

the person belonged to the Communist party. This satisfied legislators in both houses and it passed.[79]

The legislature also agreed to help out the special commission with unruly witnesses. Some leaders of the Communist party were particularly rude and scornful of commissions. Because they took the Fifth, however, the commission had no power to punish them. The legislature created a new misdemeanor for "behaving in a disorderly or contemptuous manner before [the special commission]." No one was ever prosecuted under this provision.[80]

Anticommunist legislators continued to be frustrated with the commission's inability to force uncooperative witnesses to testify. In 1955 and 1956, Representatives Charles Ianello and Edmond Donlan, ardent Boston anticommunists, introduced legislation empowering the commission to grant immunity to witnesses who took the Fifth. Once witnesses are granted immunity, they can no longer invoke the privilege against self incrimination and further refusal to answer questions is punishable with contempt. However, the legislature was unwilling to grant the special commission this much power and neither bill made it out of committee.[81]

In 1954, 1955 and 1956, resolves continuing the special commission for another year passed quickly and without incident. However, from 1957 on, opponents and supporters squared off against each other at hearings to continue the commission. The Civil Liberties Union of Massachusetts,

Massachusetts Council of Churches (representing Protestant churches), and Boston Bar Association opposed continuation of the special commission. Members of the commission, veterans organizations and Catholic lay groups favored continuation. In 1959, Bowker boasted that "nest after nest of Communists in Massachusetts were cleared out... Recruiting among Communists in Massachusetts has reached a new low and I ascribe it to the work of the Commission." Henry Lyons, appearing on behalf of the Archdiocese Council of Catholic Men and Women, argued it was "foolish to spend millions in Europe and the Near East ... and then let down the guard at home."[82]

The commission's supporters and opponents exchanged bitter, acrimonious charges during hearings in 1957 and 1958. Anticommunist legislators were entrenched in their position. As Donlan said, "It's a fight against death, not a basketball game." When the chairman of the committee holding hearings on the resolve to continue the special commission rapped the gavel to get order, people in the audience shouted back "Shut up" and "Let's investigate him." The audience jeered Howard Whiteside, Jr., attorney for the Civil Liberties Union. Christopher Ianello, a particularly fervent Boston anticommunist, yelled: "He's the one who appeared for all the Communists. I think we should investigate him."[83]

The Boston Archdiocese of the Catholic Church vigorously supported continuation of the special commission.

The Archdiocese Council of Catholic Women, the Archdiocese Council of Catholic Men, Catholic Daughters of America and the Holy Name Society all sent representatives. Henry Leen appeared as the personal representative of Archbishop Cushing to testify in favor of continuing the special commission.

A few legislators voiced opposition to the commission. In 1958, Isaac Hogden, a Republican from Belchertown, moved to refer the resolve to the next session, but his motion lost 24 to 59. The next year, Mary B. Newman, a Republican from Cambridge and former member of the special commission, moved to refer the resolve continuing the commission to the next session. Her motion failed by a vote of 18 to 81.[84] During the 1959 session, the legislature did reject a request from the commission for more funding. In 1962, Mrs. Newman tried again to end the commission; once again, the House passed up a chance to disband the commission.

Cracks appeared in the special commission too. William Randall, a Republican commissioner from Framingham, moved to change the language of 1954 provision mandating the commission to name names from "shall" to "may." Randall's amendment carried; no vote was recorded. From then on, the commission was authorized to name names, but not required to name names.

Instead of just terminating the special commission, the legislature let it die a slow death. Even though the Senate had censured McCarthy and the Supreme Court had ruled the

federal government preempted the field of subversion, the Massachusetts legislature needed to keep up the appearance of opposing communist infiltration in the state. The legislature waited until 1963 to let go of its commission to investigate subversion. That year, the resolve to continue the commission quietly died in committee.

## Investigating Communists

Members of the Special Commission on Communism, Subversive Activities and Related Matters Within the Commonwealth assembled for the first time on September 15, 1953. Two senators, three representatives and two "civilians" sat on the "Red Probe Committee." Over the next decade, they investigated subversion in schools and universities, labor unions, churches,and liberal "front" groups. The commission called hundreds of witnesses and issued lengthy reports on the "Peace Lobby" and other Communist "front" groups (1955), the International Fur and Leather Workers' Union (1955), the Union of Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America (1955), Dirk Struik (1957), and the Communist party (1958). In these reports, the commission named 134 Communists and fellow travelers. Most of the people named refused to cooperate with the commission; some had left the party years earlier and were willing to discuss their own activities but refused to disclose names of their associates., The apex of the

commission's activities and influence lasted from the fall of 1953 through 1955.

The Senate sent Philip Bowker, a Republican from Brookline, and John Powers, a Democrat from Boston. Bowker, who had served as chairman of the Committee to Curb Communism, was elected chairman of the special commission as well. Powers, an Irish Democrat from South Boston, served in the House from 1939 until 1946 when he was elected to the Senate and quickly became Democratic floor leader. He was an aspiring party politician, sometimes compared to James Michael Curley in his rise from poverty to political power broker. Like Curley, his roots were deep in anticommunist, Irish Catholic Boston. He served on the special commission until 1958 when he left the Senate to run for Mayor of Boston, an election he was favored to win but lost in the closing days when newspapers tied his campaign to Boston's latest financial scandal. When Powers left the special commission, the Senate President appointed James W. Hannigan, Jr. to replace him.

The House sent two Republicans, William Randall of Framingham and Mary Newman of Cambridge, and one Democrat, Paul McCarthy of Somerville. Randall served on the special commission until 1959 when he resigned. He started his service as an enthusiastic communist investigator. In 1954, he boasted to his hometown Rotary Club that the special commission held frequent conferences with Senator Joseph McCarthy who he described as "a hard worker and very

tenacious."[85] Five years later, however, Randall had enough. He dissented from the special commission's annual request for extension because "[t]he whole subject of communism in this state has been thoroughly looked at and further investigation is not called for."[86] When the legislature revived the special commission, he resigned. George Thompson, a Republican from Swamscott, replaced Randall.

Paul McCarthy represented Somerville in the House for nearly 20 years when he was appointed to the commission. A strong anticommunist, he served with Bowker and Powers on the joint committee that drafted the resolve establishing the special commission. When he died in 1955, Roger Sala, a Democrat from North Adams, took his place. In 1959, Ralph Cartwright, a Republican from Randolph replaced Sala. Cartwright resigned a year later and was replaced by John Barry, a Democrat from Peabody.

Mary Newman was replaced in 1955 when she lost a bid for reelection. After regaining her seat, she became one of the few legislators willing to take a stand to shut down the special committee. John T. Tynan, an activist anticommunist Democrat from Boston's Ward 6, replaced Newman serving on the special commission until 1963. Tynan shepherded annual resolves to continue the special commission through the legislature as public support waned in the late 1950s an early 1960s.

The governor appointed two "citizen" members to the special commission, George Cashman, a lawyer and former judge from Wellesley, and Richard Buckley. Cashman actively involved himself in the work of the commission. He often served as spokesman for the commission, bringing the prestige of his judicial office to the work of the commission. In December 1953, he made the first trip to Washington on behalf of the commission to coordinate work with federal agencies and congressional committees. Cashman proposed a "mutual assistance pact" to the Jenner, Velde and McCarthy committees. When he returned to Boston, the special commission met with the governor, speaker of the House, and Senate president to hear his report.[87]

Richard Buckley, the governor's other appointee, acted as the commission's unofficial liaison with the American Legion. A former commander of the Massachusetts Department of the American Legion, Buckley maintained close ties to the organization. Unaccountably, his name disappeared from commission reports in 1957 and no new appointee took his place.

Once assembled in September, 1953, the special commission's first order of business was to hire counsel. After seeking suggestions from the Massachusetts and Boston bar associations, they selected Thomas Bresnahan of Newton, a willing anticommunist. Like his counterparts on congressional committees, Bresnahan honed his talents as a cross examiner to make uncooperative witnesses appear in the

worst light possible. Once a witness took the Fifth, Bresnahan followed up with a series of preposterous questions knowing the witness could not deny them outright. Claiming the privilege against self incrimination made witnesses look like they had something to hide. Bresnahan examined most witnesses and wrote the commission's reports.

Although personnel on the special commission changed during the decade of its existence, a core group of ardent anticommunists remained to shape its work and output. Powers, Tynan, Cashman and Bresnahan formed this bloc. Bowker's role remained somewhat ambiguous since he sometimes appeared to be concerned about criticism from liberals. For instance, on the floor of the Senate in 1954, he moved to strike the House amendment requiring the special commission to name names. The following year, however, he responded to a lawsuit filed by five prominent attorneys to enjoin the commission from naming names by threatening to tear up the summons and read the names from the Senate floor where he would be immune from contempt charges.[88] It is hard to tell whether Bowker was concerned with his image or with civil liberties. As time went on, however, he identified more and more with the anticommunist crusaders.

Once assembled, the commission sought a close relationship with federal investigating committees, reserving a special place of awe for Senator McCarthy. The commission remained a very junior partner, however, often left in the dark and never given sensational disclosures to

release. McCarthy always kept those for himself. In November 1953, William Teto, a machinist from the Fitchburg General Electric plant and former UE employee, surfaced as an FBI informant before McCarthy's subcommittee holding hearings in New York City. McCarthy kept the Massachusetts commission on pins and needles refusing to release Teto to testify in Boston. Meanwhile, McCarthy grabbed the headlines on communist subversion in Massachusetts defense plants by releasing Teto's information about Communist party cells among UE loyalists in Lynn, Everett, and Fitchburg. After making outlandish promises about Teto's revelations, the special commission called Ernest Stolba as a stand-in for Teto. Stolba was Teto's "close friend and confidant" who had no direct knowledge of "subversive" GE workers and could only give the commission names he had heard Teto mention over the kitchen table.[89] Eventually Teto made it to Boston but not until McCarthy had shifted the spotlight onto other targets.

Such shabby treatment did not seem to bother the special commission. In January 1954, when McCarthy scheduled hearings in Boston, the special commission invited him to confer with them in executive session. McCarthy declined, because his "schedule was too tight," inviting them to attend his hearings instead. Wanting to appear cooperative, McCarthy told the press the commission was "welcome to any information we have about Communists in Massachusetts." Members of the commission attended

McCarthy's public hearing the morning of January 16 and then took him out to lunch at the Boston Club. Bowker and one of the commission's investigators also attended the afternoon executive session. According to Bowker, "[McCarthy] provided us with much data that we needed and we told him what we have been doing. We correlated information."[90]

During 1954, both McCarthy and special commission members took pains to play up their mutual cooperation in the press. In June, McCarthy held hearings in Lynn to follow up on "subversion" in the defense industry. Again, he told the press he "wanted to work closely with the Massachusetts Commission" and "was turning over data from some of his files relating to Communism in this state..."[91] For their part, commission members reported following up leads from information furnished by McCarthy and Jenner. The subcommittee on education summoned public school officials based on information from the Jenner committee. Powers said his subcommittee investigating unions had "coordinated its efforts with McCarthy's."[92]

Information provided by federal investigating committees came primarily from four FBI informants. All were Massachusetts residents who had voluntarily initiated contact with the FBI. The first informant to surface was Herbert Philbrick who had infiltrated the Communist party in Massachusetts in 1940. According to his account, he first entered the Cambridge Youth Council office to solicit business for the advertising company he represented. A

pacifist at the time, he was attracted by the Council member's youthful idealism and peace work. Six months later, however, Philbrick was disillusioned. He had risen rapidly to become chairman of the Cambridge Council, but was disturbed when leaders of affiliated groups used his name without first getting permission and when the national board of the American Youth Congress overturned decisions made by the local group. Philbrick concluded the Council was "nothing but a manipulated front for the plans and programs of a few behind-the-scenes operators" and called the FBI. For the next nine years, first as a member of the Young Communist League and then as a member of the Communist party, he reported on his activities to the FBI. His role as an FBI informant climaxed in April 1949, when he appeared as a surprise witness at the New York Smith Act trial of top Communist party leaders.[93]

During his nine years as an FBI informant, Philbrick never confided in his family. His mother, sister and wife were as surprised as everyone else when he took the stand in New York. Philbrick's mother believed he was trying to make up for having been rejected by the Army.[94] Once his cover was revealed, Philbrick joined the select group of professional witnesses. He was a very good witness. Philbrick had never embraced the Communist party the way other professional witnesses like Louis Budenz and Bella Dodd had, so he could not be discredited on the grounds of personal revenge or animosity.

Anticommunists in Massachusetts embraced Philbrick as a local hero. The Boston City Council declared November 21, 1951 to be "Herbert Philbrick Day." The American Legion feted Philbrick at a dinner banquet bringing in Frank Gordon, one of the lead prosecutors from the *Dennis* trial, as the principal speaker. Gordon praised Philbrick's heroism and valuable contribution to the conviction of CP leaders.[95] Before Hollywood made a movie based on Philbrick's life, one of the Boston television stations broadcast a serialized dramatization of his story.

Philbrick's publicity generated an interesting phenomenon of copycat spies. Both William Teto and Armand Penha, two other informants, admired Philbrick enough to follow his example. Teto's claim is more suspect. There is some evidence that animosity toward local UE officers motivated his action as much as Philbrick's patriotism. Albert Fitzgerald, UE's president, claimed Teto had been fired by his UE local "because he was a heavy drinker and a screwball." When Teto surfaced through McCarthy's committee, the FBI initially disclaimed any connection to him. Teto however claimed he was inspired to become a "FBI counterspy" when he heard about Philbrick.[96] According to one report, Teto gave names of thirty suspected UE communists to the commission.

Armand Penha emerged as an FBI informant in 1958. Like Teto, he was a union organizer inspired by Philbrick's example. Penha's claim is more persuasive. He served with

Army Intelligence during the war and attended law school at night after his discharge. Eventually he returned to Fairhaven, his hometown, to take a job as an inspector in a local plant. In the early 1950s, he volunteered his services to the FBI and began informing the government about Communist party activities in New Bedford and Fairhaven. When Penha surfaced in 1958, however, he had only limited, out of date information to give to the special commission.[97]

Ann Ruth Steinberg, a young Boston University student, was the fourth FBI informant. Like the others, she initially surfaced at a federal investigating committee hearing. The commission patiently waited for her to finish in Washington before hearing her testimony. She told the commission about the Labor Youth League, a group she described as a Communist party front that organized in the Roxbury and Dorchester sections of Boston. She identified eleven communists in the group, all of whom were summoned to the commission where they invoked the privilege against self incrimination.[98]

The commission also reported receiving information volunteered by patriotic individuals and groups. In December 1953, Bowker said the commission was investigating "hundreds" of Massachusetts residents whose names were supplied by twenty "voluntary informants."[99] The American Legion produced the biggest cache of names. In January 1954, Department Commander Coleman Nee gave the commission "case histories of 413 alleged Communists" and "names of

hundred of suspected Communists and left-wing sympathizers." Bowker and Powers praised the Legion's fine work claiming "the Commission now has a network into the cities and towns of the Commonwealth on a par with the underground network operated by the Communists themselves."[100]

The commission's investigators also supplied information. They followed known Communist party members and surveilled meetings of the party's front groups hoping to identify people attending meetings and associating with leaders. Once identified, investigators worked up a dossier on the person, probably relying on information from Philbrick and Teto.[101]

The special commission adopted many McCarthyite tactics. It tried to intimidate witnesses by having summonses served in the middle of the night. Witnesses had to appear with only several hours notice, making it very difficult to secure counsel. Witnesses first testified in executive session. If they refused to cooperate with the commission, they found newspaper photographers waiting in the hall outside the hearing room. Uncooperative witnesses were invariably called back to invoke publicly the privilege against self incrimination.[102]

Like McCarthy, commissioners felt frustrated by lawyers who represented uncooperative witnesses. Powers charged that a "dozen lawyers who have thwarted attempts of federal committees to check activities of alleged Communists and subversive organization are wrecking the state's commission

as well." According to Powers, these lawyers were "the number one problem confronting the commission."[103] Bresnahan, the commission's counsel, reported: "We can tell the minute we see a witness come in with one of the partyline lawyers we're going to get nothing but the Fifth Amendment."[104] Bowker wanted to know if "counsel for the hundreds of witnesses coming before us have been assigned by invisible forces."[105]

The special commission issued its first substantive report in June 1955.[106] It targeted three organizations, the New England Citizens Concerned for Peace, New England Conference for Peace, and the Committee for the Bill of Rights, the holding company for the Communist party's newspaper, the *Daily Worker*. The report named 84 members and fellow travelers. For some, their involvement occurred years before and that was noted. The report included transcripts of testimony from the eight "Peace Advocates" who had taken the Fifth. Publicizing this testimony may have backfired a bit because it shows Bresnahan browbeating witnesses. For instance, Bresnahan asked one witness where she lived. She replied that he had her address from previous testimony in executive session. Bresnahan persisted; she asked if it was really necessary to say it in a public session. He then read her address out loud and asked if she lived there.

The commission's report called for the firing of Boston University instructor Charles Hoover Russell. When he

appeared before the commission and took the Fifth, it promptly informed B.U. officials. The Executive Committee of the B.U. Board of Trustees requested a copy of the transcript. After reviewing it, they announced Russell would not be fired because they were "satisfied Russell appeared, spoke freely and answered all questions." The commission disagreed, intimating the trustees were disloyal.

The special commission had a keen interest in the labor movement and saw itself as a catalyst to assist rank and file members in removing communist leaders. In December 1953, the commission jumped into the battle between UE loyalists and IUE anticommunists five days before a NLRB election at the big GE local in Lynn. James Carey, anticommunist president of the IUE, was in Boston to address the state CIO convention and asked to testify before the commission. In a public session, he gave the commission names of 200 communists in the UE. He used his appearance as a campaign platform blasting the federal government for failing to prosecute UE leaders for perjury in filing non-Communist affidavits, for failing to put the UE on the subversive organizations list, and for failing to withdraw defense work from plants where the UE represented workers. In his speech to the CIO convention and his testimony before the commission, Carey strongly criticized employers who allowed workers to remain on their payroll after taking the Fifth about membership in the Communist party. Carey charged communism flourished in Massachusetts because of the

"vicious anti-democratic role that some employers play in perpetuating a Communist conspiracy in their own plants."[107]

Carey's fire was aimed at General Electric. Four days later, and the day before the Lynn election, GE announced a new policy. Employees who admitted being a member of the Communist party would be fired and employees who took the Fifth when asked about membership in the party would be suspended. The commission applauded GE's decision. Bowker said the new policy would help the commission. "Witnesses may not be so quick to invoke their constitutional rights if they fear that such action will mean their suspension from employment."[108]

In January 1954, Local 1282 of the Distributive, Processing and Office Workers Union of America (DPOWA) was negotiating with John Hancock Life Insurance Company for renewal of a contract that had expired. Local 1282 represented 375 insurance agents. As negotiations bogged down, union members took a strike vote that carried by a margin of 7 to 1. With a strike deadline set for March, the president of the company asked the special commission to investigate communist influence in the union.[109]

The commission summoned union leaders including Frank Siegel, president of the local. When Siegel took the Fifth, rank and file members floundered and called off the strike. In May, the insurance agents voted to leave the union and the company withdrew recognition. The company never renewed the contract and the agents got a $15 per week pay cut.[110]

A few months later, the commission intervened in another labor dispute. Local 21 of the International Fur and Leather Workers Union was negotiating for a new contract on behalf of 3,600 workers at the A. C. Lawrence plant in Peabody when Ben Gold, IFLWU's president, was convicted of perjury in signing the Taft-Hartley non-Communist affidavit. Sensing an opportunity to raid the Fur Workers, the AFL's Meatcutter's Union petitioned the NLRB for an election. The company suspended negotiations and the commission summoned Local 21's leaders.[111]

The commission knew Local 21's officers were not communists and called on MIT professor Walter W. Rostow to explain how communist international officers exerted control over noncommunist locals. Rostow studied the CIO Executive Committee's report on communist influence in the IFLWU. He traced a pattern of foreign policy resolutions passed at IFLWU conventions that "matched" the line of the Communist party. He also "discovered" a pattern of IFLWU's donations to groups on the Attorney General's list.

The commission then "exposed" for rank and file members how the local's leaders had been "duped" into letting themselves believe that "Communist top leadership was compatible with good unionism and good Americanism." When confronted by the commission, the local's business manager turned on Gold and the national leadership denouncing the "hard core of Communism in this country." During the course of the commission's investigation, Gold resigned, targeted

members of the local resigned and Local 21 voted to secede from the IFLWU. The commission concluded that "a legislative body can powerfully assist in removing Communist control over unions" by forcing public attention on the strategy and tactics of communists and by removing the fear anticommunists have that they will lose their jobs if they speak out against leadership.[112]

The commission had less success with the UE. Its leaders refused to answer questions when summoned to the commission; none turned on national leadership as local IFLWU leaders had. The commission's report named eight UE organizers and seven UE District Council 2 officers as members of the Communist party, and called Albert Fitzgerald, president of the UE, a "dupe." The commission castigated rank and file union members for permitting "agents of a foreign power to direct their destinies." It urged more "vigilance and action" and "express[ed] the hope that its investigation and report will be of assistance to union members in crushing Communist control; and, once rid of Communism, that its members never again permit it to be recaptured."[113]

In December 1953, when GE announced its new policy of firing workers who took the Fifth, Bowker hoped the threat of losing a job would loosen tongues. Apparently the threat did not work since the commission found few UE members who belonged to the Communist party. One reason may have been that McCarthy got uncooperative witnesses fired first,

leaving the commission with no threat. For instance, Alexander Gregory appeared before McCarthy sitting as a one-man committee in Lynn in January 1954. Gregory, a 64 year old naturalized citizen from Bulgaria, told McCarthy "I am placed in a position today either to testify as a political informer or lose my job." McCarthy pressed Gregory to talk about meetings of the Communist party he attended and names of communists at the meetings. Gregory replied, "I refuse to answer that under the First and Fifth Amendments on account it would bother my conscience to be an informer." A week later, Gregory lost his job at GE.[114] If UE loyalists like Gregory did not buckle before McCarthy, they were unlikely to be intimidated by the commission.

Some former GE employees worked to stop the anticommunist crusade. In December 1953, when Teto named Nathaniel Mills as a communist, GE fired him. A month later, McCarthy ejected Mills for disrupting his hearing. In March 1954, Mills appeared as a witness at a state house hearing to oppose proposed legislation prohibiting Communist party members and sympathizers from peaceful picketing. Mills told the committee he had been a member of the Communist party in 1951 when it was outlawed and he had not changed his beliefs since then. This admission prompted Representative Christopher Iannello, a Democrat from Roxbury, to take a punch at Mills. Both men were removed from the hearing.[115]

Since men like Mills and Gregory were never going to talk, the commission based its report on information from Teto and Carey. It also relied on "experts" to make the case. With the Fur Workers, the commission turned to Walter Rostow; with the UE, the commission turned to Louis Budenz. The commission cited a chapter, "Red Web in Labor," from Budenz's book, *Men Without Faces*, to make its case against the UE.

The final two reports issued by the commission concerned Dirk Struik and the Communist party. Both reports reprinted documents and testimony; neither contained any new analysis or information. Struik was a mathematician at MIT, named by Philbrick in 1949 as a leading member of a Boston cell known as the Pro-4 group. In 1951, HUAC summoned Struik where he invoked his privilege against self incrimination. Meanwhile Struik continued teaching at MIT. When the Middlesex County grand jury indicted Struik and two others for violating the 1919 sedition statute, MIT suspended Struik with pay. In 1953, other MIT professors appearing before HUAC corroborated Philbrick's charge against Struik. In 1956, when the state court dismissed Struik's indictment, MIT reinstated Struik to his former position. MIT agreed to reopen Struik's case if "new events or new information again raise the question of Professor Struik's fitness to be a member of the MIT faculty." The commission disapproved of MIT's action. Unwilling to concede, it issued a lengthy report detailing the case

against Struik hoping to rouse public opinion to its side.[116]

The most interesting feature of the Struik report is what it omits. This is the commission's only report on education. There is nothing about Harvard University, public school teachers, subversive books or any of the other education issues that concerned legislators or made headlines in the postwar period. Perhaps the commission had run out of money and was unable to do more than reprint material from its files.

The commission's final substantive report, issued in January 1958, concerned the Communist party itself. One wonders why the commission bothered; there was no new information to report, no new names to reveal. It lists 37 people giving "biographical sketches" for each one. The bulk of the report consisted of lengthy excerpts from their testimony before the commission sparring with Bresnahan, the commission's counsel, and refusing to answer questions. The report reiterated earlier charges against Reverend Donald Lothrup, pastor of Boston's Community Church. Lothrup had been a target of anticommunists for twenty years. The 1937 special commission identified Lothrup as a "fellow traveller"; Philbrick and Budenz named Lothrup as a member of the Communist party. Still, he and his group persisted.

The attack on Lothrup may have been a response to mounting criticism leveled at the commission by Protestant church leaders. In November 1956, the Massachusetts Baptist

Convention passed a resolution condemning the legislature for continuing the special commission. In 1957, the Massachusetts Council of Churches led the fight to shut down the commission.[117]

To conclude, the special commission's greatest success was turning members of the DPOWA and IFLWU against their left-led national leadership. Beyond that, the commission uncovered little information McCarthy, Jenner or HUAC had not already publicized. The handful of teachers and GE workers who lost their jobs were fired on account of testimony at federal committees not the commission.

Much harder to assess is the intangible political cost of publishing names of 137 members and sympathizers of the Communist party. Along with each name, the reports listed the person's street address and brief political biography. These were not "innocent liberals"; they were people in or near the party. Some had already broken with the party and that was noted in the reports. Nevertheless, it was an inquisition about unpopular political views and surely must have chilled the expression of ideas. On a personal level, the commission invaded the privacy of people it named, putting them and their politics on public display. The image of a rebellious Puritan pilloried on the town common seems apt.

## Conclusion

While anticommunist sentiment was not new in Massachusetts when the war ended, the cold war gave it an immediacy most Americans accepted. Local anticommunist crusaders seized on the charged political environment and pushed more initiatives through the legislature than at any other time. While historian Robert Griffith calls this process "derivative," this study shows it was parallel until 1953, and then reactionary. Few people supported the Communist party; most tolerated it as a necessary nuisance within a democracy.

Local anticommunists' call to outlaw the party succeeded when the Supreme Court ruled communist organizing was not protected by the constitution. Anticommunists' call to expose subversion succeeded because national anticommunists won that battle on the federal level and brought their investigations to Massachusetts. The state legislature had kept anticommunist activists at bay, while the federal legislature lacked the will or desire.

Anticommunist crusaders dominated the special commission. They were motivated by the teachings of the Catholic church, not party politics. Their goal was to expose un-American behavior among Yankee intellectuals and their Jewish collaborators. Twenty years later, socially conservative Irish Catholics aimed their fire at African Americans infiltrating their schools; forty years later, at lesbians and gay men infiltrating their parade.

## Notes

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# CHAPTER 7

## BAY STATE ANTICOMMUNISM IN PERSPECTIVE

Anticommunism differed among states, and often among places within a state, because local conditions differed. In Massachusetts, class and ethnicity shaped the politics of anticommunism; national and international events provided the context for action. In other states, different factors drove anticommunism. In Texas and Louisiana, for instance, where the struggle to maintain white supremacy colored all politics, white Southerners used anticommunism to discredit the civil rights movement.[1] In Hawaii and California, proximity to communist-controlled China and Korea led conservative elites to exaggerate the threat of domestic subversion.[2] The unique political culture of each state shaped anticommunist sentiment and initiatives.

From 1930 to 1960, the political culture of Massachusetts included a strong, liberal tradition among Yankee Republicans side-by-side with a strong, socially conservative tradition among Irish Catholic Democrats. Liberals' strength and prestige mediated between the far left and the far right, discrediting both and keeping the center from collapsing. Because of this, Massachusetts did not breed demagogues, like California's Senator Jack Tenney or Illinois's Senator Paul Broyles, or experience the excesses of red baiting, as in New York or California. For the same reason, the Communist party never recruited a large

cadre of disciplined members in Massachusetts. Liberal intellectuals attracted to the party maintained independence not tolerated among less prestigious members.

Liberal organizations in Massachusetts never buckled under anticommunist pressure as did their counterparts in other states.[3] Leaders of the Civil Liberties Union of Massachusetts, an affiliate of the American Civil Liberties Union, but not a chapter, refused to follow its lead and expel party members from leadership position. Many Bay State liberals responded to anticommunist hysteria on principle, not expediency.

The socially conservative Catholic tradition also rested on principle. Papal authority consistently warned Catholics about the danger of godless communism, a rival religion that attracted workers in periods of economic depression and threatened the underpinnings of democratic institutions that sustained the church in the United States. This message inspired Catholics to fight communism as a moral issue. Father Coughlin's vicious anticommunism and anti-Semitism went beyond papal authority and attracted Catholic extremists in Boston.

Based on this unique configuration in the state's political culture, Massachusetts repressed its communists reluctantly. Conservative Republicans and Irish Catholic Democrats sponsored anticommunist initiatives in the legislature; veterans groups and lay Catholics did the same on the local level. Massachusetts anticommunists maintained

an unbroken thread of activity throughout the period of this study, 1930 to 1960. Indeed, there is ample evidence of antiradicalism dating at least from the 1919 Boston police strike, and probably well before too. At times the thread was stronger, and supported by broader sectors of Bay Staters, but it was never unbroken. The evidence of anticommunism and antiradicalism during the Second World War, expressed as opposition to conscientious objectors and support for the Christian Front, links the "little Red Scare" of the depression to postwar McCarthyism.

As in other states, and on the national level, legislative initiatives peaked during the Korean War. In one important respect, however, Massachusetts differed from other industrial states unable to check the rise of local demagogues. In California, Jack Tenney led a decade long investigation of subversion in the state.[4] A leftist during the popular front era, he turned against former political associates in 1939 over a union squabble. As a politician, Tenney used anticommunism to carve out a base of power within the fractious California legislature. He held hearings across the state and filed careless reports based on flimsy evidence that eventually backfired on him, causing the legislature to appoint a new chairman.

In other states, Republican law makers personified anticommunism in their legislatures.[5] Republican Senator Paul Broyles chaired Illinois's Seditious Activities Investigation Commission and Republican Representative

Albert Canwell chaired Washington's Fact-Finding Committee on Un-American Activities, intentionally modelled on California's Tenney Committee. In Maryland, Frank Ober, a conservative Republican lawyer who was not a politician, led that state's anticommunist crusade.

New York was a slightly different case. There, the legislature as a whole, rather than one zealous anticommunist, was deeply concerned about subversion in the Empire State. One commentator noted: "The intensity [of interest about subversion] has varied from time to time, and the terminology has changed slightly, but the pattern of 1950 differed very little from that of 1798."[6]

Another point of comparison is the level to which state investigating commissions copied federal committees. Historian Robert Griffith, among others, postulates that anticommunism on the state level was "derivative" of national anticommunism and that state legislatures "responded almost slavishly to the force of federal law and precedent and to the anxieties aroused by national leaders."[7] With respect to Massachusetts, Griffith overstates the case. The Bay State set up its first investigating commission in 1937, the year before Chairman Martin Dies launched the House Un-American Activities Committee in Washington. Its second, short-lived, investigating commission in 1950-51, owed its existence more to the outbreak of war in Korea than to HUAC and other federal committees. In 1947 and 1948, Massachusetts

liberals successfully fought back a move to establish a state commission, Griffith's prediction notwithstanding. Its third investigating commission, lasting from 1953 to 1963, comes closest to fitting the thesis.

In other states, the fit is closer. Historian Michael Heale concludes that California's committee copied the methods and targets of HUAC and other committees.[8] On a slight variation of the copycat thesis, Washington lawmakers modelled their Canwell Commission on California's Tenney Commission. State committees shared personnel and resources with each other and with federal committees. Historian Ellen Schrecker found close collaboration among people connected to an "anti-Communist network" which provided expertise and information for anticommunists working on the state level.[9] The Broyles commission in Illinois hired Benjamin Gitlow, a former member of the Communist party, to investigate subversion at the University of Chicago and Dr. J. B. Matthews, HUAC's director of research, to interrogate witnesses at hearings. Matthews testified before Washington's Canwell commission as well as in Boston. Unlike these states, Massachusetts was not intimately connected to this network, perhaps because no demagogic politician led its anticommunist probe. Instead, shared informants, like Herbert Philbrick and William Teto, provided the most important link between national and state investigations.

Even though California's experience mirrored the red scare in Washington, Heale argues that alone does not explain what happened. A full analysis incorporates "the impact of foreign affairs on the state's own political configuration." In other words, postwar anticommunism was a product of influences from above and below. This fits the evidence from Massachusetts as well. In 1953, local politicians reacted both to diocesan pressure and to that of federal investigating committees focused on Massachusetts by establishing its own committee to "clean house."

More work has been done on the state level than the local level, making comparison even riskier. Don Carleton, in his detailed study of anticommunism in Houston's public school system, found a small group of right wing, elite women, who belonged to the loosely organized national network of Minute Women, led the crusade.[10] Conservative newspaper editors and businessmen aided their efforts. In Massachusetts, elite matrons, like Zara Dupont, were more likely to be demonstrating against the execution of Sacco and Vanzetti than against leftist educators. The Bay State had its share of right-wing women, but they had much less influence than the women in Houston. The Houston women led a moral crusade, backed by the Baptist and Methodist churches. In Massachusetts, only Catholic women had their church's support. Right-wing, Protestant women lacked a religious, moral component in their crusade.

James Selcraig, in his study of Midwestern anticommunism, also looks at local factors. He finds conservative businessmen, conservative press, Legionnaires, and anticommunist liberals supported local initiatives. Although there are many similarities with Massachusetts, each state had a unique configuration of factors. In addition to the local actors Selcraig found, Catholic lay groups in Massachusetts consistently and ardently battled subversion. Newspapers played different roles in Massachusetts than in the Midwest. Throughout the Bay State, many papers, such as The *Boston Herald*, *Christian Science Monitor*, *Springfield Union*, *Berkshire Eagle* (Pittsfield, Mass) decried the excesses of anticommunism. Of course, there were others that applauded anticommunist initiatives, like the *Boston Post*, *Boston American*, and *New Bedford Standard Times*. In the Massachusetts press, then, anticommunism was a contested topic.

None of the state and local studies look at how anticommunism operated within the labor movement, and thus miss an important part of the picture. In Massachusetts, opportunist labor leaders capitalized on anticommunism to eliminate their left wing rivals. However, a surprisingly large number of workers were more interested in the labor record of their leaders than in their political beliefs, suggesting that working men and women were much less concerned about communist infiltration than were politicians and labor leaders.

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[8]Heale, "Red Scare Politics," pp. 30-32.

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APPENDIX

PERCENT OF POPULATION THAT IS NATIVE BORN WITH NATIVE PARENTS, BY RACE, AND FOREIGN STOCK,* BY COUNTRY OF ORIGIN, IN CITIES OF 50,000 OR MORE, 1930

| | Boston | Worcester | Spring-field | Fall River |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Total | 781,188 | 195,311 | 149,900 | 115,274 |
| **Native born-native parents** | | | | |
| White** | 26 | 30 | 39 | 21 |
| Negro | 3 | 1 | 2 | - |
| **Foreign stock*** | | | | |
| Ireland | 20 | 15 | 13 | 8 |
| Other Canada | 11 | 5 | 4 | 1 |
| French Canada | 1 | 9 | 10 | 22 |
| Italy | 12 | 6 | 8 | 2 |
| England/Wales/ Scotland | 5 | 5 | 6 | 15 |
| Poland | 3 | 5 | 5 | 5 |
| Russia | 9 | 3 | 4 | 2 |
| Scandinavia | 2 | 9 | 2 | - |
| Germany | 2 | 1 | 2 | - |
| Portugal | - | - | - | 11 |
| Azores | - | - | - | 9 |
| Lithuania | 2 | 8 | - | - |
| Finland | - | 2 | - | - |
| Greece | 1 | - | 1 | - |
| Other | 4 | 4 | 4 | 3 |

*Foreign stock includes foreign born residents plus people born in U.S. with at least one foreign born parent.
**This figure includes second generation immigrants.
Source: U.S. Census, 1930

| | Cambridge | New Bedford | Somer-ville | Lynn |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Total | 113,643 | 112,597 | 103,908 | 102,320 |
| **Native born-native parents** | | | | |
| White** | 27 | 20 | 30 | 34 |
| Negro | 5 | 3 | - | 1 |
| **Foreign stock*** | | | | |
| Ireland | 20 | 5 | 18 | 13 |
| Other Canada | 13 | 2 | 18 | 15 |
| French Canada | 4 | 18 | 2 | 7 |
| Italy | 8 | 1 | 12 | 5 |
| England/Wales/ Scotland | 5 | 15 | 6 | 6 |
| Poland | 3 | 5 | 1 | 3 |
| Russia | 2 | 2 | 1 | 5 |
| Scandinavia | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| Germany | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Portugal | 3 | 10 | 2 | - |
| Azores | - | 14 | - | - |
| Lithuania | 2 | - | - | 1 |
| Finland | - | - | - | - |
| Greece | 1 | 1 | 1 | 3 |
| Other | 4 | 3 | 7 | 4 |

*Foreign stock includes people born in foreign countries plus people born in U.S. with at least one foreign born parent.
**This figure includes second generation immigrants.

Source: U.S. Census, 1930

| | Lowell | Lawrence | Quincy | Newton |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Total | 100,234 | 85,068 | 71,983 | 65,276 |
| **Native born-native parents** | | | | |
| White** | 27 | 17 | 36 | 45 |
| Negro | - | - | - | 1 |
| **Foreign stock*** | | | | |
| Ireland | 18 | 13 | 10 | 15 |
| Other Canada | 6 | 8 | 14 | 12 |
| French Canada | 22 | 16 | 2 | 3 |
| Italy | 1 | 18 | 10 | 8 |
| England/Wales/ Scotland | 9 | 11 | 12 | 7 |
| Poland | 4 | 5 | - | - |
| Russia | 1 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| Scandinavia | 1 | - | 6 | 2 |
| Germany | - | 4 | 2 | 1 |
| Portugal | 2 | - | - | - |
| Azores | - | - | - | - |
| Lithuania | 1 | 3 | - | - |
| Finland | - | - | 3 | - |
| Greece | 4 | - | - | - |
| Other | 4 | 2 | 2 | 4 |

*Foreign stock includes people born in foreign countries plus people born in the U.S. with at least one foreign born parent.
**This figure includes second generation immigrants.

Source: U.S. Census, 1930

| | Medford | Malden | Holyoke |
|---|---|---|---|
| Total | 59,714 | 58,036 | 56,537 |
| **Native born-native parents** | | | |
| White** | 36 | 31 | 23 |
| Negro | 1 | 1 | - |
| **Foreign stock*** | | | |
| Ireland | 14 | 13 | 20 |
| Other Canada | 17 | 17 | 4 |
| French Canada | 2 | 2 | 22 |
| Italy | 4 | 8 | 1 |
| England/Wales | 7 | 6 | 8 |
| Scotland | | | |
| Poland | - | 3 | 13 |
| Russia | 1 | 10 | 1 |
| Scandinavia | 2 | 4 | - |
| Germany | 1 | 1 | 4 |
| Portugal | - | - | - |
| Azores | - | - | - |
| Lithuania | - | 1 | - |
| Finland | - | - | - |
| Greece | - | - | - |
| Other | 4 | 4 | 4 |

*Foreign stock includes people born in foreign countries plus people born in the U.S. with at least one foreign born parent.
**This figure includes second generation immigrants.

Source: U.S. Census, 1930

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